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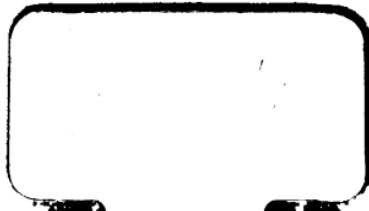


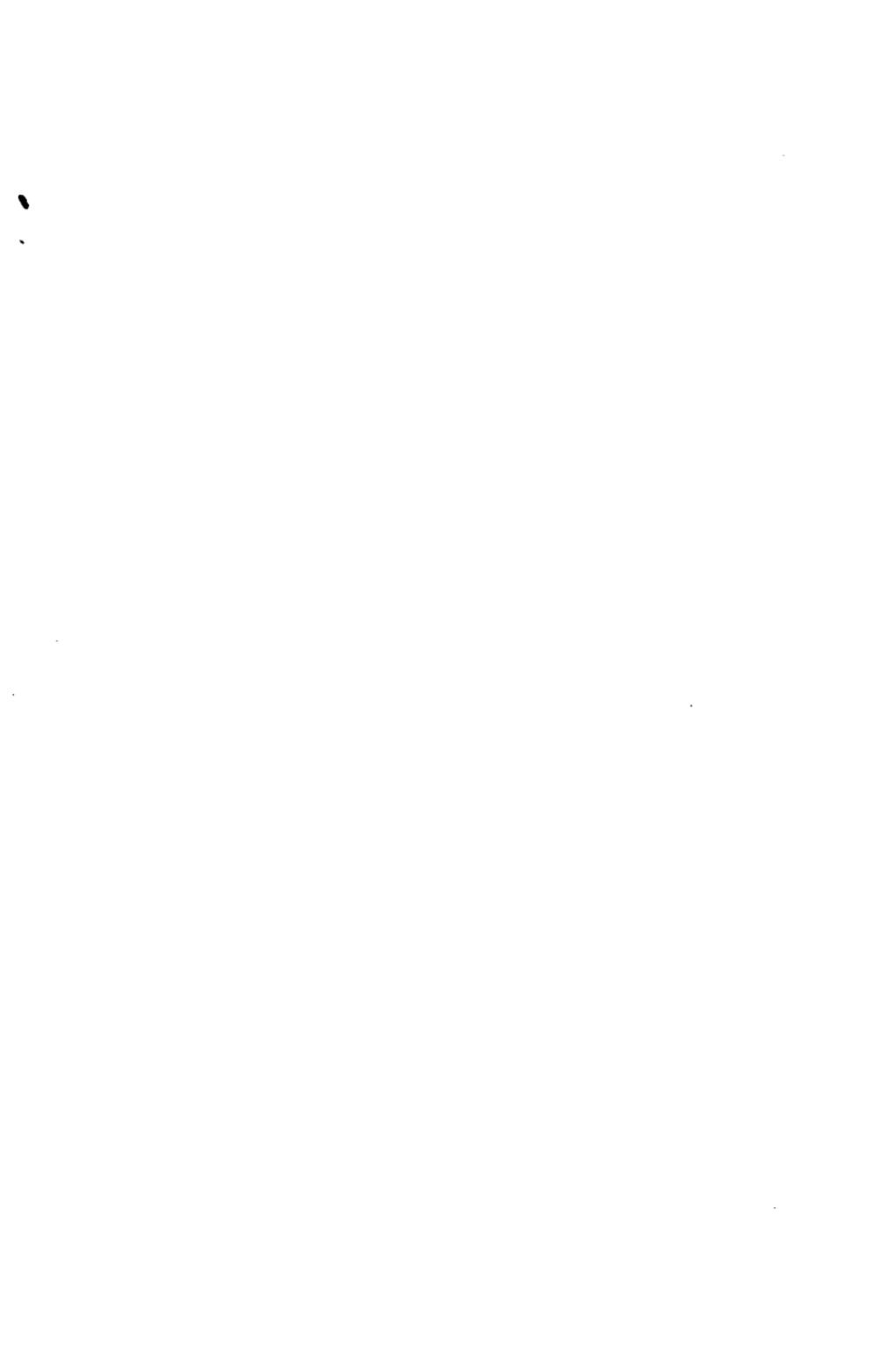
FROM THE BEQUEST OF  
CHARLES SUMNER

CLASS OF 1830

*Senator from Massachusetts*

FOR BOOKS RELATING TO  
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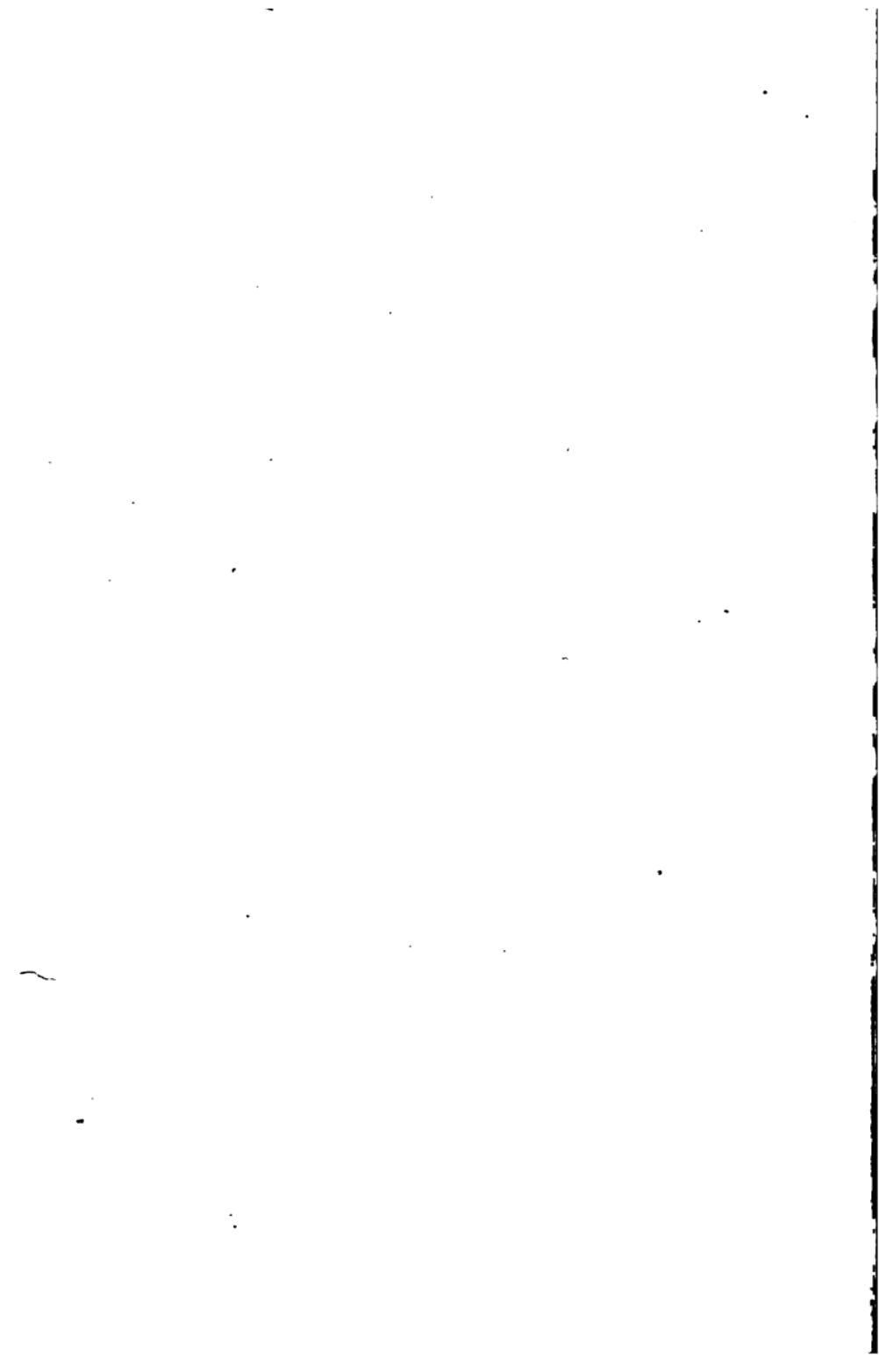








POLITICS IN 1896



# POLITICS IN 1896

AN ANNUAL

EDITED BY

FREDERICK WHELEN

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## P R E F A C E

THE close of each year calls forth a cloud of retrospects, written from many points of view, valuable at the moment, but ephemeral as a single issue of a daily paper. The present volume presents retrospects of the past year, from the three political attitudes of Conservative, Liberal, and Socialist, which may serve as permanent records of political events and as material for the study of comparative politics.

In addition to these General Retrospects and to the Diary of the Year, five special articles are added. Those on Foreign Politics, the Navy, and the Army are demanded by the great importance of presenting annually a connective view of the development of these three vital parts of our political life. That on the United States places before the reader, from the American point of view be it understood, the present situation in the States, and the different influences that, in a year when

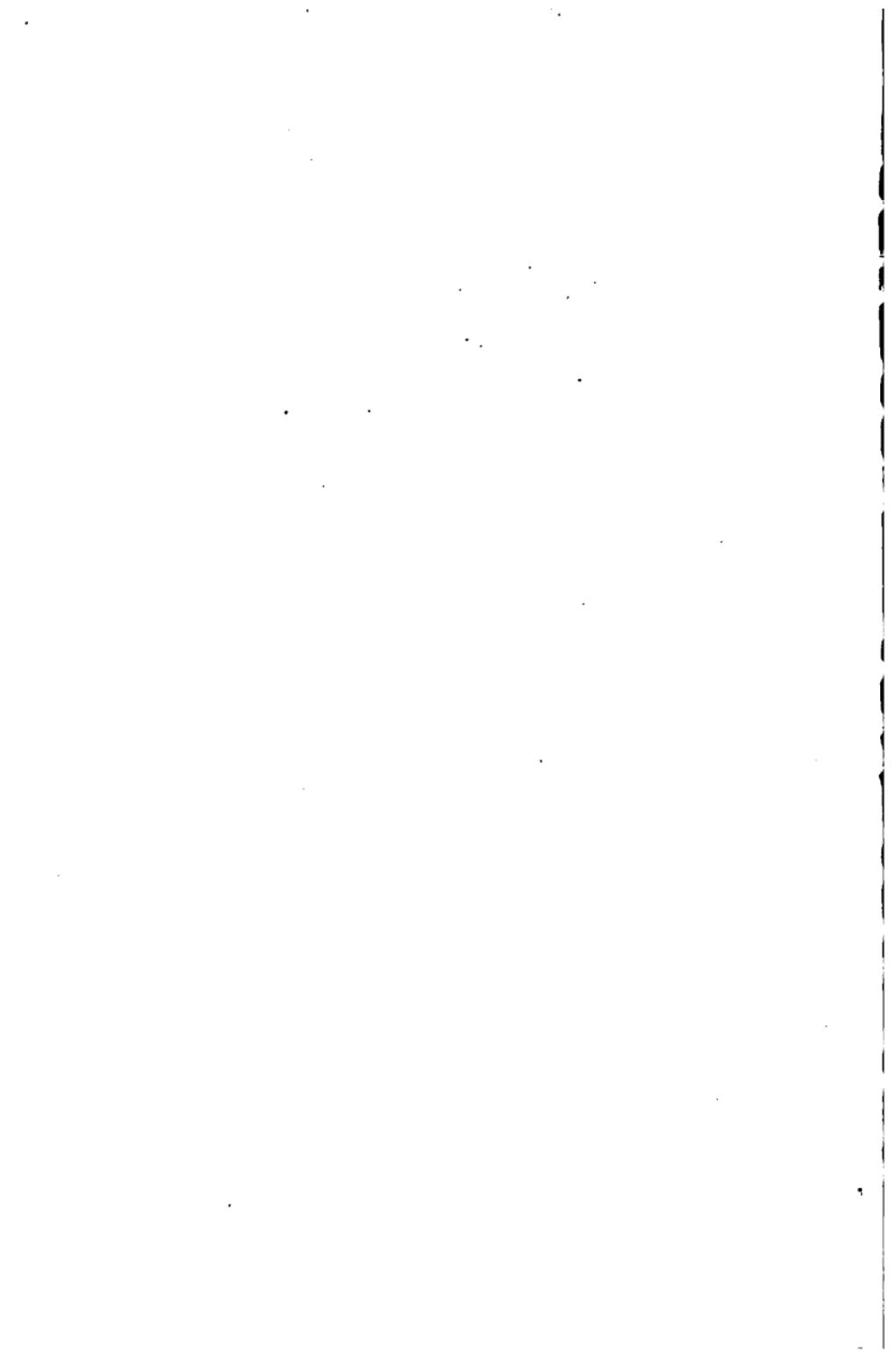
controversy between Washington and Europe has led two countries to the verge of war, have made that situation. London specially required separate treatment. After suffering for so many years from arrested development, it has at last "found itself," and displays in the bitter controversies of Moderate and Progressive, and in the local demands for Incorporation, evidences of re-birth.

Anticipating criticism, the editor wishes it clearly to be understood that it was no part of his plan to prevent points of difference between the individual contributors, or the overlapping of their subjects. In the first section such differences and overlappings were inevitable and desirable; where they occur elsewhere they have the advantage of enabling the future reader to recapture something of the warring controversy rife at the moment at which the book was written.

It is intended to issue a similar volume annually.

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## I. GENERAL RETROSPECTS

### i. CONSERVATIVE

THE wisdom of antiquity has abounded in proverbial warnings against man's tendency to indulge in premature assumptions of prosperity or success. "Look to the end," "The end crowns the work," "Call no man happy till he is dead," are but a few among many such exhortations to prudence: and they are surely no less needed by nations, by communities, by political parties than by men. Nor, perhaps, has their necessity ever been more conspicuously illustrated than in the political and parliamentary history of the year which has just come to an end. For if ever there was an occasion when it might have been thought reasonably safe to prepare a welcome for Fortune before her arrival, and to compose a boastful epitaph commemorating the triumphant career of an infant still in its cradle, that occasion seemed to present itself to the Unionists at the opening of the Session of 1896. But a few months before, they had returned from the polls with a larger ma-

jority than had been won by any political party since 1832 ; they were led by the most experienced and accomplished of English statesmen still taking part in public affairs ; their forces were marshalled and their movements directed in the House of Commons by one of the most brilliant of Parliamentary debaters and acutest of political thinkers whom the constitutional struggle of the last ten years has brought to the front ; and they were represented in the counsels of the Sovereign by one of the strongest administrative combinations of modern times. But beyond and above all those sources of strength, they possessed the inestimable advantages of independence and a free hand. They were in the supremely fortunate position of a party which had not so much conquered by its own efforts as had victory presented to it by the errors and follies of its adversaries. Its elevation to power, therefore, was unpurchased by any promises to the electorate, and virtually unconditioned by any stipulations on the part of the country. They succeeded to a statutory obligation to effect a certain re-adjustment of the Irish Land Laws, and it was understood that they would take steps to prevent the heavy loss, pecuniary and other, which the public would sustain by the extinction, then apparently threatening, of the voluntary elementary schools. But with these exceptions they may be said to have received a "blank mandate" from the constituencies. Substantially, they

might fill it up as they pleased, so long as they observed moderation in the number of their entries. For speaking generally the country was less concerned about the matters which its Government would touch than about those which they hoped it would let alone. For the overwhelming sentence pronounced upon the Radical party from one end of the country to the other was before all things a protest against the restlessness of revolutionary innovation, and a cry for political repose.

Everything, moreover, which had happened since the general election was calculated to add emphasis to the demand. The close of the year 1895 and the early days of 1896 formed one continuous period of grave anxiety with respect to our affairs abroad. Hardly had the nation recovered from the shock of President Cleveland's message—the effects of which upon Anglo-American commerce and finance were still disastrously active—when the Jameson raid upon the Transvaal, and the now historic telegram which its defeat elicited from the German Emperor, threw the country into a ferment of excitement such as had not agitated it for over forty years. Happily in this, as in the Venezuelan crisis, which had so recently preceded it, the Government showed themselves equal to the urgency of the occasion, and to the imperious demands of public feeling. Just as they had received the American President's somewhat remote and abstract hectorings with dignity

and composure, so they met the more practical and pressing menace of the German attitude towards British rights and interests in South Africa with spirit and promptitude. The admirable rapidity of diplomatic action by which Mr. Chamberlain cleared his country of complicity in Jameson's lawless enterprise, was fully matched in the sphere of naval activity by the instant equipment of a flying squadron for the armed assertion, if necessary, of our apparently challenged suzerainty over the Transvaal. Reassured by this timely vigour of Ministerial action, the British public gradually recovered their wonted calm; and the net result of the war-scare was to bring a large accession of moral strength to the Government, and to make the Colonial Secretary for a time the most popular man in the country.

When Parliament assembled, therefore, in the second week of February, there was a twofold ground of expectation that Ministers would meet it with announcements befitting the strength of their position at home, and the number and gravity of their preoccupations abroad. For there was not only every reason to believe that the country desired no elaborate programme of domestic legislation, but there was, in any case, every excuse in the condition of foreign affairs for restricting the number and scope of their legislative projects. With what strange imprudence Ministers threw away their ad-

vantages—how perversely, in the language of Scotch theology, they “sinned their mercies” is only too notorious; but a detailed account of their error and its punishment must be reserved to a later stage of this narrative. Let us for the present pursue the history of our foreign policy and international relations—a history of which for the moment the most interesting chapter had been opened by the crisis in South Africa. In relation to this Mr. Chamberlain had still explanations to render; for though the vigour and decision with which he dealt with the consequences of Dr. Jameson’s rash adventure were universally commended, he had yet to defend the general course of his policy towards, and of his negotiations with, the South African Republic. This defence, however, he conducted in two or three Parliamentary debates with his wonted dexterity and spirit; and while, on the one hand, firmly opposing the attempts of the Radical Opposition to apply the method of “Jedwood justice” to the Chartered Company, and insisting on the formality of trial before condemnation, he offered all reasonable facilities for enabling that trial to be held. It was arranged that, so soon as the proceedings then pending before the English tribunals against Dr. Jameson and his comrades for an infraction of the Foreign Enlistment Act reached their natural termination in the conviction or acquittal of the defendants, a Parliamentary inquiry should be in-

stituted into the causes and circumstances of the Transvaal Raid, and into the responsibility, if any, incurred by the Chartered Company and its officers in connection therewith. The indictment of the raiders was in due time tried at bar before the Lord Chief Justice and two other judges, and resulted in a verdict of guilty against Jameson and four of his fellow defendants, who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment in the first instance as ordinary, but afterwards, as the result of representations to the Home Secretary, as first-class misdemeanants. The sentence as thus mitigated met with general approval. It was then, however, too late in the Session to open the promised Parliamentary inquiry, which was accordingly postponed to the present year.

Early in the month of March a fresh addition was made to the subjects of national interest in connection with our affairs abroad by the announcement of an intended advance of Egyptian troops into the Soudan. Coming as a complete surprise upon the English public, and being, as was alleged, unexpected even by the military and diplomatic servants of the Crown in Egypt, the news was not unnaturally received in this country with some uneasiness; and the new departure in policy was promptly canvassed by the Opposition in the House of Commons. There the policy of the Government was vindicated by Ministerial speakers, and notably

by Mr. Chamberlain, with courage and confidence, though not, it must be admitted, to any fully explanatory effect. Its official defenders appeared to waver between two distinct and not precisely parallel lines of apology,—one representing the forward movement as forced upon us by the growing anarchy and disorder prevailing in the region beyond the then frontier of Egypt at Wady Halfa; the other describing the advance as a diversion in favour of Italy, at that moment staggering under a disastrous defeat from the forces of King Menelik, and menaced in the possession of Kassala by a convergence of the scattered hordes of fanatical Dervishes in the direction of that important stronghold. The duplicity—using the word in its primary and inoffensive sense—of this reply was not unfairly criticised; but it was less reasonably complained that the “objective” of the advance was left uncertain. Mr. Chamberlain’s declaration that the immediate goal of the expeditionary force was Dongola, but that whether it halted at that point or pushed on farther would “depend upon the amount of resistance which it encountered,” came in for a good deal of cheap and not particularly intelligent ridicule. The Radical satirist apparently did not perceive that to overcome resistance means before everything to add to military expenditure, and that as he, the aforesaid satirist, had been almost in the same breath declaiming

against the iniquity of charging the revenues of Egypt with the cost of enlarging her dominions, it was a little inconsistent to taunt the British Government with their determination to cut her territorial coat according to her financial cloth. It was not then known that a minority of the Commissioners of the Egyptian Caisse—to wit, the French and Russian members of that body—would, after refusing their assent to the draft upon their surplus, contest its legality before the law courts, and obtain a judgment in their favour which has since, to the general surprise of lawyers, been confirmed by the Chamber of Appeal of the Mixed Tribunals. The effect, however, of this grotesque decision on the military policy to be pursued in the Soudan is and will continue *nil*. Its political effect has been to make Great Britain the creditor of the Egyptian Treasury for the costs of the expedition, and to give her a clear lien upon the revenues of the reconquered territory as a security for repayment of the debt. It is not impossible, therefore, that France may live to regret the short-sighted petulance which has dictated her whole action in this matter as bitterly as she has regretted the access of timidity and jealousy which prompted the withdrawal of the French ironclads from the harbour of Alexandria on a certain critical morning in July, 1882.

To those who were not determined to find am-

biguity in the Ministerial statements, both the purpose and the limitations of the forward movement into the Soudan must have been plain enough. The important and once-flourishing city of Dongola, and the fertile valley which it commands, were in any event to be reconquered and restored to the rule of the Khedive; and in case of its appearing in the course of such reconquest that the military power of the Khalifa was no longer formidable, the newly acquired frontier was to be made the base of further operations for the recovery of the Eastern Soudan and of Khartoum. Even the former, however, and lighter of these two enterprises, was regarded with acute patriotic apprehension by the Radicals. They insisted with painful anxiety on the appalling dangers and stupendous difficulties of a march into the Soudan. They dwelt with melancholy unction on the invading armies which had "fattened the region kites" of that inhospitable wilderness—from the trained warriors of Cambyses to the chicken-hearted fellahs of Hicks Pasha. They descanted in awe-struck tones on the fanatical bravery of the Mahdists, and rose to enthusiasm in extolling the defensive capacities of the sand-flats of Wady Halfa. In short, they knew infinitely more about the strength of the Egyptian frontier position than the British officers who had planned and manned it, and more about the aggressive power of the Khalifa than Slatin Pasha, who had

spent ten years as his captive, or than Major Wingate, whose agents and spies had for years kept him informed of every movement of the Dervish tribes, and of every wave of tribal feeling in the Soudan.

There were others, however, both in Egypt and England, to whom, unprovided though they were with the Radical sources of information, the real state of matters was pretty well known, and who looked forward to the results of the expedition with a confidence which the event has fully justified. The advance from Wady Halfa to Dongola was, from the military point of view, an uninterrupted success, and a success the more signal and creditable because achieved in the face of unforeseen and incalculable difficulties of the gravest order. During the earlier stages of the enterprise and the trying weeks of necessary delay, while the expeditionary force was waiting for the rise of the Nile to make river operations possible, the troops were visited by an outbreak of cholera, causing great mortality. Hardly had this abated when the camp was laid waste and its railway communications washed away by a rain-storm of such violence as had been unknown to this usually waterless region for more than half a century. Other and minor, but vexatious, mischances followed to impede and delay an advance which, in any case, would have had to wait upon the progress made in securing communications

with the base by the construction of a railway; but as soon as the force got fairly under way, it never met with a check.

Setting out in March, the expedition reached and took Akasheh before the end of the month. Here they remained and fortified themselves, the intention being to make this post the first important position south of Wady Halfa. The halt at Akasheh was necessarily a somewhat long one, not merely because it was desirable to secure the communications of the force with its base by the extension of the railway from Sarras, but also because there would in any case have been nothing to gain by a further advance at a season of the year at which the state of the Nile precluded the co-operation of the gunboats which were to assist in expelling the Dervishes from Dongola. During the next two months the construction of the railway proceeded rapidly, the troops meanwhile vigorously clearing the country round them of the hovering Dervishes, a body of whose horse and camelry was dispersed with loss on May 2. By the first week in June all was in readiness for continuing the march, and on the 6th of that month the troops advanced a distance of sixteen miles to Firket, on the right bank of the Nile, where they found the enemy occupying a strong position, from which, after a sharp fight of some two or three hours in duration, they were dislodged. They made a brave resistance, and the

engagement was, therefore, well calculated to test the somewhat distrusted merits of the Egyptian troops. Their behaviour, however, both in this and in an action fought on the previous day, under the command of Colonel Burn Murdoch, did thorough credit to their English training. A dozen years of this discipline might be expected to do something, and it was clearly shown to have done much. The battalions who repulsed a charge of Dervish cavalry at the point of the bayonet, and who bore the brunt of the hard fighting which was necessary to carry a position held to the last by the desperate valour of their desert foe, have assuredly earned the right to be treated as stout and trustworthy soldiers. It was a complete and even a crushing victory, and was followed by the fall of Suarda, the advanced post of the Khalifa, and the base of the predatory attacks of his marauding followers, let loose from time to time on the Nubian villages within the "English pale." No exact information of the strength of the defeated Dervish army was procurable, but it was computed to consist of seven or eight thousand men.

For nearly another month the captured position at Firket remained the headquarters of the expedition. It was not till July 4 that a further advance was made without resistance to Kosheh. The railway was then energetically pushed forward, and by the beginning of the following month it had been brought up to the point marked by the expedition.

But the final blow was not yet to be struck. From the first the chapter of physical accidents had been unfavourable to the advance, and it now took a more adverse turn than ever. The Nile which had been rising at an exceptionally slow rate, and was three weeks after its time in reaching its normal height for the period of the year, now fell slightly, and to add to existing difficulties a strong south wind set in, preventing river traffic altogether. On August 27 a tremendous cyclone accompanied by torrential rains broke over the camp, blowing down tents and huts, destroying telegraph wires, and washing away a considerable portion of the railway. It was not till the second week of September that all was in readiness for a further forward movement, and on the 12th of the month the troops advanced to Dulgo, and by the 18th they had reached the Third or Hannek Cataract. It had been anticipated that the Dervishes would make their last stand at Kerman on the right bank of the Nile, but on the following day the Sirdar occupied this position without resistance, the enemy having retired across the river to Haffir on the opposite bank. It was on this, their chosen, ground that the decisive battle of the campaign was fought.

The position was well selected. In the foreground were groups of palm and acacia trees, behind which the enemy's camp extended for a mile with strong earthworks and loop-holed mud-walls. A smart en-

gagement, which occupied all the morning hours of Saturday, ended in a complete victory. Three of the gunboats at the same time forced their way upstream and engaged the Dervish forts. After four hours' fighting the fire of the enemy was silenced, Haffir was evacuated, and the steamers, with the exception of one of them, which struck on to a rock at the south end of the Hannek Cataract, pursued their course in the direction of El Ordeh or New Dongola. Reaching the town they drove out the inhabitants, seized all the public granaries, and established themselves in a position which the retreating and shattered Dervish forces, straggling back from Haffir, would have found it impossible to retake. But, indeed, there was no danger of any such attempt, for the victory of Haffir had given the death-blow to the resistance of the Dervishes. Wad-el-Bishara, their leader, who had been severely wounded, was in no mood for further fighting, and although he made for awhile a show of determination, he did not again stand up in any genuine sense of the word to the Egyptian attack.

Early on the morning of the 23rd the Sirdar and his forces were again on the move, and in an hour's time they had reached the enemy's encampment, the gunboats at the same time steaming side by side with the army up the Nile. A brief artillery engagement between the steamers and the forts then followed; but before the land forces could come to

blows with the Dervishes, Wad-el-Bishara and his principal lieutenant themselves set the example of retreat. This desertion of their leaders naturally completed the demoralization of the Dervish force, and they broke and made for the desert, carrying their women and children with them, the latter of whom, however, were dropped upon the sand when the pursuit became hot, and were carried back into camp by the pursuing cavalry on the pommels of their saddles. In a few hours the Egyptian flag was waving over Dongola, and this brilliant little campaign was brought to an end. It completed the first stage in the military programme sketched out by Mr. Chamberlain in the important speech to which reference has been made above; and it marked the limit of operations for the past year. That it will, however, be followed in due course by an advance upon Khartoum is not open to reasonable doubt. But in the meantime the falling Nile has of itself interposed an insuperable obstacle to any immediate advance, and it is possible that international diplomacy will have a word to say before operations are resumed. But even from the point of view of frontier defence it would be clearly impossible to remain at Dongola, which is open to attack by the desert routes from the east and south, to say nothing of the Nile itself, by which it can be approached from Old Dongola along some forty miles of easily traversed stream. The least that can be done is to

occupy El Debbeh, Korti, or Merawi, which command the short cuts from the Khalifa's capital, or better still to take possession of Abu Hamid at the furthest point of the southern bend of the river. But our retrospect is threatening to become a forecast, and we must dismiss the subject.

Against the brilliant success of our arms, or at any rate our generalship and military administration in Egypt, we have had to set off the defeat, more apparent perhaps than real, but none the less damaging on that account, which our diplomacy has sustained in Eastern Europe. Perhaps, however, it would be more strictly correct to antedate the check which it experienced in the spring of 1896 to the late autumn of the previous year. For it is probable enough that but for the language held by Lord Salisbury at the Guildhall banquet of 1895, with reference to the Armenian question, and the attitude which he was then supposed to have adopted towards the Sultan with respect to that question, the impression that Her Majesty's Government had met with a humiliating rebuff at the hands of that potentate and his advisers would never have been created. It is certainly no new or particularly disconcerting experience for any one European State to find that the policy of isolated action, in a coercive sense, against Turkey involved adventures too dangerous to be embarked upon, without the express or well understood sanction of the other

Powers. It is, indeed, an only too common expression of the impotence to which international jealousies and rivalries have reduced Europe, in face of the "sick man" for many a generation past. But Lord Salisbury's words at the Guildhall were taken, and it must be admitted not unreasonably, to imply, either that the co-operation of the Powers in coercing the Sultan had been actually obtained, or that he had in some way or other satisfied himself of the prudence and safety of launching England single-handed upon such an enterprise. How so experienced and so circumspect a statesman as the Prime Minister was betrayed into the use of language from which that inference could be so naturally, yet so incorrectly, drawn, must remain among those mysteries of diplomacy which are never likely to be solved unless by the disclosure, fifty years hence, of secrets now hidden away in the private journals and memoranda of diarizing statesmen. No long time was however to elapse before the misleading character of Lord Salisbury's utterances was exposed. When the time arrived for the actual adoption of the vigorous measures with which the Sultan had been threatened, it straightway appeared that one, and that the most potent of the Powers, not only declined to join in any proceedings of coercion, but was understood to have not obscurely threatened counter-action on her own part, in the event of any such proceedings being resorted

to. In the face of this notification, Her Majesty's Government had no choice but to retire.

The chagrin of the violently anti-Turkish party in the country was of course unbounded; but they were destined to receive yet further provocation. Towards the end of the month of August, an outbreak organized by Armenian revolutionists took place in Constantinople, and either became the cause of spontaneous and ferocious reprisals on the part of the Mohammedan population of the city upon their Armenian fellow-citizens, or was seized upon by the Turkish authorities as an opportunity for letting loose the savagery of one of the two races for the extermination of the other. Certain it is that for two or three days in succession the Armenians of Constantinople were exposed to the murderous attacks of the Mussulman rabble, with little or no protection from the Turkish police, and that great numbers of them were massacred or maltreated. A great wave of wrath, righteous enough in itself, but indulged beyond all bounds of reason, patriotism, and even humanity, swept over the more excitable portion of the British people. Fanatical sympathizers with the slaughtered Armenians showed their horror at the bloodshed which had stained the streets of Constantinople, by clamouring for the immolation of thousands of their fellow-countrymen, and hundreds of thousands of their fellow-creatures on the far vaster altar of a general

European war. Radical politicians and Radical journals took up the cry in the hope of embarrassing a Unionist Government; ecclesiastical persons, Anglican and Nonconformist, echoed it from—it is charitable to suppose—a mistaken sense of professional duty; and the whole tribe of notoriety-hunters joined in the chorus with the single-minded purpose of advertising themselves. In the middle of the month of October the outcry had reached its height. A meeting of the agitators was held at the St. James's Hall, and the Bishop of Hereford—a prelate whose heroic readiness to subject the Church of England to the rough surgery of the Welsh Nonconformists had procured his advancement to one of the Sees which would have suffered partial amputation—informed the assembly that he had a soldier son whom he stood ready to offer up to the great principle of avenging the murdered victims of a street riot, by bringing death and mourning into myriads of European homes.

This patriarchal sacrifice, however, was not required of him, though in the unavoidable absence of a “ram caught in the thicket by his horns,” the episcopal Abraham and his fellow-agitators were compelled to execute themselves. Their very meeting, in fact, had been rendered suicidal by a startling event which had recently preceded it. On the morning of the 8th of October, little more than a week before the day fixed for the demonstration,

Lord Rosebery, in a letter to Mr. T. E. Ellis, the chief Opposition whip, suddenly announced his retirement from the Leadership of the Liberal party. The reasons alleged for this sudden, and to the public wholly unexpected, step, were, first, an apparent difference between himself and a large section of his party on the Eastern Question; secondly, the fact that on this same question he was not altogether in agreement with Mr. Gladstone; and thirdly, that he had failed to receive "explicit support from the party generally." The day after the publication of the letter, Lord Rosebery addressed a large audience at Edinburgh, and further vindicated his action in a speech which will rank by common consent as the ablest and most impressive of all his oratorical efforts. In those sentences of it which he devoted to the question of the Armenian massacres and the international situation arising thereon, he exhibited the dangers of isolated intervention in convincing terms. He showed that to talk of "putting pressure" upon the Sultan without the employment of physical force—as in Mr. Gladstone's proposal to withdraw our ambassador—was merely futile; while the employment of force would involve military and naval operations of the most formidable magnitude, to say nothing of the tremendous risk of its international consequences. Of these Lord Rosebery spoke in words which, coming from a speaker of such authority, must have sunk deep into the hearts of

his hearers,—indeed of every man in the country who still retained his judgment and his sense of the relative proportions of human calamities. “I am not less haunted,” said he, “than you are by the horrors of Armenia; by the horrors that have transformed an earthly paradise into an organized hell. For all that, I would not attempt to do away with those horrors by adding to them a horror a hundred-fold greater. It is not ours to dispense in the world universally the punishment of wrong and the reward of right. We have to balance, as it were, two evils, and of the two I cannot hesitate between the evil of Armenian massacre alone, and the evil of Armenian massacre *plus* European war.” Mr. Gladstone’s indirect reply to this passage in Lord Rosebery’s speech was given by him in a letter, written by him to be read at the St. James’s Hall meeting, and in which he went the length of the following utterance:—“To say that our enforcement of our treaty right to stop massacre”—meaning, of course, our isolated action in that sense—“would provoke hostilities from one or more Powers, is, in my judgment, a wild paradox, without support from reason or history.”

The ball came back again over the net the very next day. “On the risks,” said Lord Rosebery, “of a European war depending on our isolated intervention in the East, my conviction is strong and my information is good; and it will not be

destroyed by any rhetoric however impassioned, or any deductions from inward intelligence as opposed to the facts I have laid before you."

Having thus to choose between the deliberately weighed opinion of a trusted Foreign Minister, provided with the latest opportunities of knowing the minds of the various Powers, and the mere rhetorical *ipse dixit* of a statesman whose whole diplomatic record during sixty years of public life had been a synonym for weakness, short-sightedness, and failure, the prudent portion of the English people did not hesitate long over the selection. Whatever waverers there may have been among them rallied promptly to the side which had the support of the best heads and the fullest knowledge to be found among the two great parties combined, and left ignorance and passion to go their further way alone. It was not, however, a long way. The agitation was practically snuffed out by Lord Rosebery's letter and speech, and in a few days more it had ceased to flame upon platforms, and was reduced to smouldering dully in the columns of a single Radical newspaper.

Lord Rosebery's resignation, however, had of course much more far-reaching results than this. It left the Liberal flock not only without a shepherd, but with no approach to unanimity of preference for any successor to the abandoned crook. Its late possessor in the formal act of laying it aside

was supposed to have nominated one whom he considered the fittest of his companions to take it up. He pointedly singled out Mr. Asquith at Edinburgh for the special praise of being endowed with "that rare combination of head and heart, which, in my humble judgment, if my prophecy be worth anything, will conduct him to the highest office in the State." But in a speech made a few days after, Mr. Asquith, who may quite possibly have been more embarrassed than gratified by this somewhat premature testimonial, repudiated the construction put upon Lord Rosebery's words. And after a few feverish bids in the rival Radical newspapers for the support of the party to their own particular favourite for the leadership, the brief dispute over the succession to the late leader died suddenly down. It was generally understood that Lord Kimberley would take command of the party in the House of Lords, and the House of Commons was, of course, already provided for. There was therefore no urgent necessity for coming to any decision as to the new leader of the party as a whole; and if there was any hankering after an immediate settlement of the question, a nearer survey of it soon convinced the hankerers that they had better leave it alone for the present. The Executive of the National Liberal Federation met and separated without coming to any conclusion on the point.

And well they might; for, as has since begun to

dawn upon the shepherdless flock in general, the only man really competent to wield the crook is the very one whose assumption of it would provoke the greatest hostility among competitors for the pastoral office. It was Sir William Harcourt's extreme unpopularity with his colleagues which is universally believed to have been the original cause of his being supplanted by Lord Rosebery; and the fact that he has avenged himself by making the Parliamentary and political situation impossible, is not likely to have drawn them any closer to him. They have, in fact, made no secret of their regret at Lord Rosebery's retirement, and of their sympathy with him under the trials which he declares to have forced that step upon him. No fewer than twelve of the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench supported him by their presence on the Edinburgh platform at the final scene of leave-taking, and assisted at the unanimous carriage of a resolution which declared, among other things, that the meeting regretted their late leader's retirement, and "respectfully placed before him its earnest hope that he will be able, on further consideration, to return to the leadership of the party whose spirit he so truly and courageously represents." This resolution was supported by Mr. Asquith in a speech, in which he declared his own and his colleagues' "loyalty to our chief, attachment to his leadership, and absolute and unqualified

confidence in his policy." He went on to refer significantly to the peculiar and unprecedented difficulties with which Lord Rosebery had been beset and encumbered in the work of leadership, and to declare that the more the Liberal party considered the matter the more strongly would they feel that events had ratified the decision which they had arrived at three years before, to wit, that Lord Rosebery was "the only fit successor to Mr. Gladstone." A public declaration from one of the principal officers of a general's staff, to the effect that some one else is the only fit man for the command-in-chief, can hardly be regarded as likely to smooth their relations with each other; and if Mr. Asquith's opinions on this matter are shared by many of his colleagues, the question of the succession will not be finally settled without considerable difficulty. The strength, however, of Sir William Harcourt's position is, that the only fit successor of Mr. Gladstone as leader of the party, does not sit in the House of Commons, while on the other hand, Mr. Gladstone's only fit successor as leader of the House of Commons, is demonstrably, or rather demonstratedly, Sir William Harcourt himself. That the least popular should be also the only eligible candidate for the vacant post, is a circumstance so peculiarly unlucky, that even an opponent feels bound to offer his condolence upon it to the Liberal party. But it promises to add

considerably to the interest of the coming session.

In the meantime, Lord Rosebery's action has tended—as for the purposes of our Eastern policy he patriotically designed it—to strengthen the position of the Government in this regard. The agitation which was so summarily snuffed out on the platform is not likely to be rekindled in Parliament to any effect. The public have been too deeply impressed by Lord Rosebery's warnings, and by the spectacle of his unqualified adhesion to his successor's guarded policy, to approve of any Parliamentary effort to revive the expiring clamour for isolated intervention. The subsequent attempts of diplomacy to bring joint pressure of the moral order to bear on the Sultan have, thus far, had but obscure and not very satisfactory results. Up to the present there has been much ambassadorial marching and counter-marching at Constantinople, with mighty little to show for it; but since it is this or nothing—if, at least, we dismiss an alternative which would be much worse than nothing: to wit, the provocation of a general war—the sensible portion of the British, as of every other European nation, must be content to possess their souls in patience and await events.

With the single exception of the Eastern Question—where failure may be regarded as the normal experience of European diplomacy in every country but one—there is no great concern of our foreign affairs

with which the present Government have not dealt satisfactorily, and from their dealings with which they have not emerged with unimpaired, if not enhanced credit. But this only emphasizes the contrast between their fortunes abroad and at home. For while in that department of their activity in which party and Parliamentary strength are of little and only indirect value, they have been almost uniformly successful; their achievement in that domain of politics where party and Parliamentary strength was supposed to be everything, has been singularly disappointing. This no doubt is due, in a certain measure, to that very strength itself. It is only an apparent paradox to say that in this particular matter there is weakness in numbers. It must never be forgotten that in this country the control of a Government over its supporters rests upon a wholly unofficial basis. It wields little or nothing of the power of patronage which Ministries possess in countries in which politics are pursued as a profession; and the proportion of persons who enter public life with a single eye to public, or at the worst only to social considerations, and without any deliberate aim at office or official emoluments, is relatively small. In England there is always a large majority of politicians in either party who enter Parliament either because they are genuinely interested in political questions, or because they covet the local eminence which a seat in Parliament

confers upon them among their friends and neighbours, and not at all because they hope to obtain any office or place of dignity from the particular Ministers in power. Upon such followers—and, as has been said, they largely preponderate in all English political parties—only two controlling influences can ever be brought to bear: the traditional restraints of party discipline, and personal anxiety for the retention of the seat. Both these influences of course are indefinitely weakened by a strong majority, which enables individual members and groups of members to assert their independence to any extent which does not threaten such consequences as the overthrow of the Government, or the total and permanent disruption of the party.

It would almost seem from the event as if the Government in general, and Mr. Balfour in particular, had entirely lost sight of these all-important considerations. One could almost believe them to have assumed that the mere strength of their following would enable them to carry measures of a more complicated and controversial character than they could otherwise have hoped to get through. As a matter of fact, their great preponderance in numbers had, for the reason above given, an exactly opposite effect. It simply extended the area of possible contention, while at the same time withdrawing one of the most potent of the restraints by which contention is in ordinary cases kept within

bounds. In the case of the principal Ministerial measure of the session, the enlargement of the field and enhancement of the intensity of dispute had results that bordered on the disastrous. That measure itself was indeed well calculated to produce them, for instead of being—as the wiser members of the Unionist party hoped that it would be, and as the public in general would have been well content that it should have been—limited to the specific object of rescuing the voluntary schools from threatened destruction, it went on to propose a plan of wholesale decentralization which Ministers could not possibly or at any rate could not reasonably have expected Parliament to accept without protracted discussion and indeed much vehement debate. The School Boards, in the first place, were to be disestablished, and the education authority for every county and borough was, subject to the general supervision of the Education Department, to be a committee appointed by the county or borough council. All grants to schools were to pass through the hands of these committees, who were to undertake the ordinary duty of inspection, checked by the reports to the Department on the results. Secondary education was to be in charge of the same bodies, with the powers conferred by the Technical Education Act, and the control of the moneys diverted from its original purpose—the compensation of the licensed victuallers—to the assist-

ance of the secondary schools. Reformatory and industrial schools were also to be placed under the new authorities. The main point, or what should have been the main point of the measure, was the power given to the newly created educational authorities to distribute an added grant from the Exchequer of 4*s.* per child among voluntary schools and necessitous Board Schools. Other important changes were, the abolition of the 17*s. 6d.* limit to the amount of the Grant, the exemption of schools from rates, and the empowering of the local authority to impose a limit on the indefinite increase of the school rate. To meet the objection raised by the Secularist party in education to the bestowal of the proposed grant on denominational schools, it was proposed, by a supplementary conscience clause, to make it a condition of title to such grant that the manager of any school receiving it should permit arrangements to be made on the application of a reasonable number of parents for giving separate religious instruction.

The rejection of the Bill was moved by Mr. Asquith, and rejected by the unexampled majority of 423 against 156; and after a debate of four sittings, and finally the application of the closure, the Bill was read a second time on May 12. The Irish Nationalists, acting in the interests of the Catholic clergy in Ireland, voted for the second reading in a body, to the high disgust of their Radical comrades,

with whom they speedily became involved in a sharp dispute, which threatened at one time to lead to an open rupture, and has undoubtedly left a permanent soreness behind. It was not till the second week in June that the Bill went into committee, and by that time the mischievous effects of over-loading it had already fully declared themselves. There were the plainest signs of serious dissension in the ranks of the Ministerialists. The policy of decentralization, in important details at any rate, if not in principle, divided Unionist opinions. The religious instruction clause, while provoking Non-conformist and Secularist hostility, was by no means universally acceptable to the Church party. Both Anglican and Roman Catholic school managers agreed in protesting against what they held to be the inadequacy of the Grant. Some of the County Councils emphatically expressed their reluctance to accept the responsibilities which the Bill proposed to throw upon them. And lastly, there arose among the strongest supporters of the voluntary schools an acute difference of opinion as to whether aid should be given by Government Grant, as the Bill proposed, or by allowing voluntary schools to obtain a share of the rates.

It was easily to be foreseen that a house thus divided against itself could not possibly "stand," and, as a matter of fact, the Bill had not been many days in Committee before it became evident that the

foundations of the structure were undermined, and that its gradual, if not its sudden, collapse was inevitable. Amendments to the Bill accumulated by the score, a large proportion of them emanating from the Ministerial ranks; obstruction became easy and plausible, and was successfully practised. Matters went almost daily from bad to worse, until the Leader of the House, at last recognising the almost desperate character of the situation, convoked a meeting of the party at the Foreign Office. This, however, failed to yield a solution of the difficulties in which the Government were entangled; it may be said, indeed, to have rather complicated them than otherwise. For the meeting separated after having agreed, at Mr. Balfour's instance, on the singularly ill-advised plan of adjourning the Session at the appointed time in August until the middle of the following January, and then to proceed with the measure. It was the course adopted in 1893-94 with the Parish Councils Bill of the last Gladstone Administration, but the experiment, even in that case, was not so brilliantly successful as to invite repetition, and in the case of a measure so vehemently and so obstinately opposed as this Education Bill, it would have been tried under far more disadvantageous circumstances. The fact that a Session thus adjourned must, under imperative financial and legal necessities, be brought to a close in March, would of itself have offered temptations which an ob-

structive minority could hardly be expected to resist; and it was seen to be as good as certain that, if Mr. Balfour's plan were adopted, the Government would find themselves confronted with the two equally ineligible alternatives of forcing the Bill through the House of Commons by the use of the gag and the guillotine or of withdrawing it after having wasted some eight weeks of the new year in futile and acrimonious debates. A few more days of reflection sufficed to convince Mr. Balfour himself that his plan was impracticable, and he announced the withdrawal of the Bill, at the same time promising that the Ministerial pledges of assistance to the voluntary schools should be fulfilled at as early a period as possible in the coming year.

With the next most important measure in their programme—the Irish Land Bill—the Government were more successful; but here again they found their way seriously impeded by difficulties which were mainly of their own creating. Here again they were led astray by their delusive faith in the omnipotence of their overwhelming majority, and suffered once more from the needlessly ambitious character of their legislative projects. For just as it had been expected that the Education Bill would aim at little more than providing the necessary relief for the voluntary schools, so the expectation was that in their Irish Land Bill the Government would confine themselves mainly to the renewal and ex-

tension of the existing statutory provisions with reference to land purchase. When, however, the comprehensive measure, which Mr. Gerald Balfour introduced in a speech of more than three hours' duration, was explained to the House of Commons, it was found to contain proposals of a much more far-reaching and contentious kind. Among them were clauses proposing large changes in tenure in favour of the occupiers, which were resisted by the representatives of the landowners, partly on the ground that they involved a further depreciation in the value of their property, and partly because they raised a number of questions which would have to be decided by costly litigation between landlords and tenants. The Bill further embodied a plan for fixing rents for a term of thirty years, to be valued every five years by the Land Commissioners, in accordance with the variations in the prices of produce, together with many other alterations in the purchase system, designed to promote and expedite sales. And yet another apple of discord was thrown down to the two rival interests in Irish land in the shape of a provision for bringing properties in the Landed Estates Court into the market without delay. The representatives of the tenants, however, although they accompanied their assent to the measure with certain inadmissible demands, were ready to accept it as an instalment of their claims, while the landlords hoped much, not only from an

improvement of the purchase clauses, but from a reform of procedure that would restrict the at present inordinate expenditure in law costs. Hence the second reading of the Bill was carried, not indeed without protest, yet without a division.

As usual, however, it was in Committee that the real struggle set in. The Leader of the House had declared that he could only afford some four days for the Committee stage, and it was again and again repeated that the Measure would not be proceeded with unless it were treated as non-contentious. Nevertheless the ground was obstinately contested in Committee, and one amendment on which landlords and Nationalists joined was carried against the Government. They were destined, however, to sustain what was in reality a more serious rebuff than this, and before the improvement clause was reached, the Chief Secretary, alarmed at the resistance which he was encountering among his followers, attempted a "transaction" with the landlords, which resulted in the Government bringing forward certain amendments with a view to a clearer definition of the improvement clause, and the consequent prevention of litigation. All too soon, however, it appeared that this concession could not be made without offence to that section of their supporters in Ulster who were represented in Parliament and in the Administration by Mr. T. W. Russell. And upon this Minister's threat of resignation if the

amendments were proceeded with, Mr. Balfour hastily abandoned them. The procedure clauses were at the same time dropped, and the improvement clause itself was temporarily abandoned, to be brought forward in a new form. Then it was the turn of the landlords to be reckoned with, and their cause was advocated by Mr. Carson in a speech of such indignant remonstrance as to lead to the most dramatic incident in the debate, or perhaps in the Session, Mr. Balfour being for the first time roused from his usually imperturbable calm to reply with something like passion to the reproaches of his colleague. The improvement clause was subsequently brought up in a form which reduced the provision that the landlords sought to define to its original vagueness, and the contentious elements in the Bill having thus been disposed of, it met with little more opposition in the House of Commons, and it was ultimately sent up to and read a first time by the Lords on July 29.

Its vicissitudes, however, were not even yet at an end. The Irish landlords muster strong in the House of Lords, and are there represented by several peers of marked ability and possessing a practical acquaintance with the subject which is nowhere to be matched except by one or two occupants of the Nationalist benches in the House of Commons. The Bill was taken charge of by Lord Lansdowne, whose management of it was un-

doubtedly tactful, and who did all that was possible to allay the distrust and to disarm the hostility which its provisions were only too calculated to arouse. A vigorous opposition was, however, offered to it by Lord Londonderry, the Duke of Abercorn, and other Irish landowners, and the Government, although re-inforced by a contingent of Radical peers, were beaten again and again in divisions by considerable majorities. The result of these defeats was the introduction of two important changes in the measure, one relating to the claim of tenants to a reduction of rent on the ground of occupation right, and the other excluding pastoral holdings of between £50 and £100 rateable value from the operation of the Bill. Both these amendments were, however, rejected by the Commons on the return of the measure to the Lower House, and for a day or two its fate hung in the balance. The hostile Lords, however, gave way, and the Bill became law.

To the failure of the Education Bill and the somewhat inglorious triumph of the Irish Land Bill, it remains to add the history of the third important Ministerial measure of the Session, to which much was sacrificed in the way not only of time, but probably also of popularity, by its authors—the Rating Bill. Its introduction was no doubt unavoidable. Ministers and the Unionist party in general had too deeply pledged themselves at the polls to come to the relief of British agriculture.

The Bill introduced by them in redemption of their pledges proposed that occupiers of agricultural land should be remitted half the amount of the rates payable in respect thereof, the deficiency, computed at £1,550,000 a year for England and Wales, being met by a grant from the Imperial Exchequer, and the amount for the last six months of 1896–97 being provided in the Budget. This main proposal of the Bill was denounced by the official Opposition as relieving one class of the community at the expense of all the other contributors to the revenue, and, in addition to this general ground of objection to it on the Opposition side of the House, it had to encounter adverse criticism from a section of the Ministerialist on the specific ground of its unequal treatment of the urban ratepayers, upon whom local imposts press in many cases as heavily as they do on the agricultural class. Four days were occupied in the development of these theses, after which the debate on the second reading was summarily brought to an end by the closure. Later on the Government managed to propitiate their borough members by consenting to limit the operation of the measure to five years, and to institute an inquiry into the reform of the whole system of local taxation; but the hostility of the Radicals remained of course unabated, and the opposition to the Bill after growing more and more obstinate, without parting at first with its original *bona fides*, degenerated ultimately

into deliberate and malicious obstruction. Amendments were moved restricting the operation of the Bill in every direction; and though they were all rejected by large majorities, they gave occasion for the interminable repetition of second reading speeches, and indeed for the exercise of every art by which Parliamentary debate can be wantonly prolonged. It was only after four sittings in Committee that the first clause was carried by the application of the closure; and though the remainder—all of them of a merely auxiliary character—were got through at the next sitting on the eve of the Whitsuntide vacation, this was only done by keeping the Committee at work from three o'clock on one afternoon till half-past one p.m. on the following day. On the report stage the battle was renewed, or rather fought over again, since the contest could only be prolonged by dint of the unending repetition of speeches which had been delivered time after time at earlier stages of the Bill, and by perpetual reintroduction, under more or less transparent disguises, of amendments which had been fully discussed and decisively rejected in Committee. On the fourth day of "the consideration of the Bill as amended," the report stage was brought to a close, though only after a debate of more than seventeen hours in duration. On July 1 its rejection was moved on the third reading; and after an extravagantly violent denunciation of its principle by the

Leader of the Opposition, it was carried by a large majority, and sent up to the House of Lords, where naturally enough it had little or no opposition to encounter. But, on the other hand, it is only fair to admit that the resistance which it did encounter in the House of Commons was equally natural; and that the fact of its being so should have been, as apparently it was, left entirely out of account in the Ministerial calculations, adds new and eloquent testimony to the spirit of overweening optimism in which they framed their programme. It might have been right to propose a legislative "benevolence" to the distressed agriculturist, or it might have been wrong; but that it could plausibly, and therefore would with an indefinite amount of obstinacy, be resisted by the Radicals was absolutely certain. And the certainty of long contention over the measure should have warned the Government to confine the Education Bill within more moderate limits than they assigned to it.

In view of the severe and protracted struggles which delayed the passage of two of the principal ministerial measures, and actually wrecked the third, the Government may well consider themselves fortunate in having achieved even a fairly satisfactory record in minor though useful legislation. Foremost, perhaps, in this category may be classed the Cattle Diseases Bill, a measure by which it was proposed to stereotype the policy pursued by

successive Governments for several years past, of prohibiting the importation of live animals from abroad. It was, of course, opposed as a measure of "protection" for farmers; and in this case also, a certain amount of resistance from the representatives of the urban electorate was to be expected, and had, in fact, to be reckoned with. But at no time did either of these obstacles assume anything like serious proportions, and the measure was carried by large majorities through each successive stage. To this must be added the Light Railways Bill, the Trade Conciliation Bill, the Coal Mines Bill, the Truck Bill, and the Locomotives on Parish Highways Bill, which passed easily through the Standing Committee, and for the complete enactment of which it fortunately proved possible to find time during the last days of the expiring session.

The Budget, which was introduced on April 10, was of a modest and unsensational character. Sir Michael Hicks Beach was able to show that the national finances were in a satisfactory condition; and that, but for the increased demands of our Naval policy to be hereafter referred to, there would have been a much larger prospective surplus to be dealt with, the expenditure for 1895-96 being 97½ millions, while the revenues amounted to nearly 102 millions. For 1896-97 he estimated the expenditure at a little over 100 millions, and the receipts at 101½ millions, showing a surplus of

£1,700,000. The estimates were framed with caution, the Chancellor of the Exchequer declining, for instance, to reckon upon any increased yield from the death duties. If the disposal of the surplus gave no particular satisfaction to any class of the community, except perhaps the farmers, it caused, on the other hand, no serious disappointment; for the income taxpayer having learnt by long and melancholy experience to expect nothing, must be regarded as having received the full measure of his expectations. The land tax was readjusted out of the surplus at a cost of £100,000, while a further sum of £200,000 was expended on a similar readjustment of the death duties, and the remainder was disposed of by the assignment of £975,000 for the relief of rates on agricultural land in the three kingdoms. The naval policy of the Government, as disclosed in the Navy estimates and the Naval works, revealed the gratifying fact that our first line of defence was to be powerfully strengthened; the realized surplus of 1895-96 being allocated partly to the provision of the sum required by the Supplementary Naval estimates of the year, and partly to meet the initial expenditure upon Naval works which the new Bill proposed to increase from 8½ millions to 14 millions. The Navy estimates for 1896-97 were £21,823,000, or an excess of more than three millions on the expenditure of the previous year.

It is pleasant to be able to close our retrospect of the politics of 1896 with the record of the settlement, within but a few weeks of the close of the year, of the long-standing frontier trouble in South America on amicable terms. In the Guildhall speech of November 9, Lord Salisbury was able to express his belief that the controversy between the United States and ourselves was almost at an end. The Governments of London and Washington had definitely agreed that there should be a treaty of arbitration from which the "settled districts"—those portions, that is to say, of the disputed territory on which British settlers had for a longer or shorter period established their abode—should be excluded; and that, in deciding as to what districts are and what are not to be regarded as within such rule of exclusion, the tribunal should admit and apply the principle of prescription. "We have agreed," said the Prime Minister, "that we should treat the Colonial Empire just as we treat individuals, that the same lapse of time which protects individuals in civil life from having their title questioned should also protect the English Colony from having its title questioned." A joint Commission is therefore to be appointed, consisting of five members: two of whom will represent Great Britain, two the United States, while the fifth is to be some independent jurist possessing the confidence of both parties. This

prolonged and, in some of its phases, embittered controversy may have results even more important than the adjustment of a single international dispute. For English and American statesmen are now engaged in considering the possibility of framing a general scheme for the settlement of all future disputes between their two nations by the method of arbitration, and there is good ground for the belief that their labours will not be fruitless.

H. D. TRAILL.

## ii. LIBERAL

1896 has not, save in one respect, been a fortunate year for Liberalism. Nowhere save in some British colonies, and notably in Canada—where Free Trade statesmanship, led by a man of character and sagacity, is in power—has it seen a distinctively progressive Government. On the Continent of Europe two distinctly anti-Liberal forces—Militarism and Protection—are supreme. In Belgium, in Germany, and in Austria, the progressive movement has been submerged either by a wave of clericalism, as in Belgium, or, as in Germany, by the disappearance of the older Liberal individualism, and its replacement by Social Democracy of the Marxian type. As for France, she has almost ceased to possess any progressive domestic policy. Her interests are absorbed in the commercial race, in which Germany has of late outpaced her, in the Russian alliance, which necessarily makes against the traditions of the Revolution, and even of the Republicanism of 1870, and by her struggle, first, against her great military rival on the frontier, and then against the naval supremacy of England. Europe

has nearly doubled its naval budgets during the past twenty-five years, and we have the spectacle of purely military powers adding a new blood-tax of colossal dimensions. The Russian fleet in the Mediterranean is being rapidly increased, and the German fleet, excellent both in men and in material, is a new and threatening development of the organizing genius of the Fatherland. Armies, too, are continually increasing, and being continually re-armed with costly weapons. A European war would see over 14,000,000 of men standing to arms; and even Italy, under a fairly pacific government, is again raising her military standard.

No such movement can go on without affecting Liberalism in a country which has been its chief centre for half a century. The activities of the country are largely drawn from political and social reform to the consolidation of empire, the increase of armaments—our army alone is now costing close on forty millions a year, and the cost of the navy has doubled in a decade—and the battle of commerce. Moreover, Liberalism has suffered the same process of disintegration as has overtaken it elsewhere. The Manchester school has virtually disappeared, though it has not been replaced by an organized Socialist party, which in Germany practically represents the Opposition, and which in France, though less powerful, tends to form a loose working alliance with Radicalism. The Independent Labour Party is,

however, of some strength in Bradford—its birth-place—in Manchester, and other Lancashire towns, in Newcastle, and in Glasgow; and in all these centres it stands for a probable loss of seats to the Liberal party. But outside the Marxian Social Democratic Federation no dogmatic theory of Socialism exists in England. We have simply a permeating force which the growth of municipal institutions encourages, which now appears as an advanced Labour Party, and now again affects the Liberal view of such questions as the restriction of the hours of labour, or the tightening up of factory and workshop law.

Liberalism in England, moreover, has suffered from causes of weakness peculiar to itself. It has had to work without the impulse communicated to it by Mr. Gladstone's unique personality and intensity of purpose. It has had to endure personal differences among its chiefs, and it can no longer count on the steady support of the flower of the middle and working classes. But its adhesion to Free Trade is a real source of strength to it, and the continued expansion of British industry supplies a testimony to the soundness of the legislation of 1846 and of the Gladstonian Budgets. Protection, indeed, which was the basis of the old Tory party, makes no progress. It is beaten back at every fresh advance by the bottom facts of British trade—our dependence upon free imports, and our supremacy as the sea-

carriers of the world. Even Mr. Chamberlain's tentative hint at a Zollverein has been coldly received by the Chambers of Commerce, and it is clear that it does not even meet the genuine wishes of the protectionist colonies, who are quite ready to foster their own industries at our or any one else's expense.

It is indeed as a critical force that Liberalism survives, and is not likely, so far as one can look into the future, to lose its hold on this country. In the three great foreign controversies of the year—arbitration, the South African crisis, and the Armenian agitation—it has practically represented the actual policy of England. On another question—the Rating Bill—it has probably represented the opinion of the constituencies. On a fifth—the battle on the Education Bill—it has routed the Government and greatly qualified their Parliamentary prestige. Even with its own ranks depleted as they have been depleted, it is still powerful enough to form an alternative Government to Lord Salisbury's. Practically, too, the coalition Government is restricted to the task of interpreting the main lines of policy and administration which earlier Liberal Ministries laid down for it. The Budget of 1894, the Local Government Act, the successive Franchise Acts, the Gladstone and Northcote sinking funds, constitute the main tracks along which our financial and domestic policy must travel. Though we have a stout old Tory in power, the fact remains that, partly by the

conditions of the coalition, and more effectually by the undeviating habits of British politics, the Government is rather Whig, or Moderate Liberal, than Tory. It is something to have maintained so great a measure as the Finance Act, subject only to a trifling relief to owners of heirlooms. It is much more to have been able to maintain the Education Act of 1870 against a most powerful and carefully prepared attack, fomented by the rural and the northern clergy, and backed by the grudges of a generation.

A smaller, though necessarily incomplete, victory of policy has been apparent in the controversy over the Turkish question. The agitation, though necessarily non-partisan, was mainly a Liberal agitation, and, as in the Education struggle, it exhibited Liberalism and the Unionist fragment actively working together. It could not have been more completely justified than by Mr. Balfour's declaration that "Lord Beaconsfield was dead," and that, therefore, there was no object in attacking his policy. Unfortunately, that policy has lain at the root of nearly all our difficulties. Whatever may have been the precise force of the Cyprus Convention, it acted, in conjunction with the destruction of the San Stefano Treaty by England, as a virtual permit to the Sultan to do as he pleased with Armenia. The Treaty of San Stefano placed Armenia under a Russian protectorate. The Treaty of Berlin

weakened this to a European protectorate. The Cyprus Convention interpreted this as an English protectorate. How could there be a more precise devolution of responsibility, or, on England's part, a more complete failure to fulfil it? The object of such a policy was, clearly, not the protection of Armenia, but the defeat of Prince Gortschakoff. This policy was made clear by Mr. Frederick Greenwood, who was unquestionably in Lord Beaconsfield's confidence, in an article in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in September, 1896 :—

“ Disraeli’s policy during the Russo-Turkish War was a policy of armed intervention. He would have fought the Russians in alliance with the Turks. If he could he would have raised Turkestan against the Russians at the same time for the relief of our Indian frontier: measures to that effect were considered, if not arranged. That was what he proposed to do, and would have done, but for the strong opposition of his colleagues in the Cabinet. His motive? . . . It is true that Disraeli was a Jew, was pleased with the grandiose, would no doubt have liked to link his name with a memorable Eastern enterprise, and was probably grateful to those Mohammedan Turks who were so good to his people. . . . Disraeli thought this policy good, because it bolstered up the British Empire, and did so not in keeping up Turkey, but in keeping Russia down.”

Now if Lord Salisbury did not interpret the Convention actively as a mandate to Great Britain to save Armenia, he has unquestionably ceased to interpret it negatively as an anti-Russian instru-

ment. The English policy to-day is, as the result of twenty years' criticism, of twenty years' trial in the fiery furnace of fact, practically that of promoting, instead of retarding, the break-up of the Ottoman Empire. In spite of some weakness in action, Lord Salisbury has, I imagine, been a not unwilling agent of this change. And unquestionably, too, the anti-Turkish policy of Mr. Gladstone has wiped out the pro-Turkish policy of Lord Beaconsfield. Since the Armenian massacres of 1891-92 there has been, so far as intention is concerned, practically little change in the attitude of Great Britain towards Turkey. Lord Rosebery has, in fact, had his i's dotted and his t's crossed by his successor. Thus Lord Rosebery proposed a Commission to inquire into Turkish atrocities, which the Sultan promptly turned into a Commission to inquire into Armenian conspiracies. Lord Salisbury capped it by suggesting a mixed Turkish and European Commission of surveillance to reside in the Armenian provinces. Lord Kimberley threatened coercion to the Porte, and Lord Salisbury organized it, with the assistance of the German, Austrian, and Italian squadrons, up to the point of the forcing of the Dardanelles. It is at the point of decisive action, against European unwillingness or timorousness, that all our statesmen have failed us. Lord Salisbury had his chance in 1895, and at the critical moment withdrew the British squadron,

certain as it would have been of the support of the Triple Alliance.

It is this fact which has given the "Forward Movement," started by Mr. George Russell and Mr. Clayden, its one justification. But the Edinburgh speech and the general line of the Liberal leaders, with the exception of Mr. Bryce, made it impossible to conduct such an agitation with assistance from the front bench. And Mr. Russell has properly defined it as the act of the rank and file who believe in England's right to intervene, and in the necessity, on political and moral grounds, of bringing the Sultan to account. A body of men who will hold no terms with either front bench, and, in season and out of season, will keep the Eastern question to the front, will have to be reckoned with in the new year. If Lord Salisbury fails either to obtain a settlement or to show that he has spared nothing to obtain it, a thoroughly party turn will definitely be given to the controversy. Personally I prefer the policy of maintaining touch with the Unionists and with the sympathetic Tories. But Mr. Russell may fairly argue that the Liberal party has its historic interest in the question, and that this must at all costs be vindicated. The feeling evoked by the agitation has been tremendous. For the moment final utterance is impossible between the two points of view. Time, with his scythe ready for the Ottoman rule, must judge.

Incomparably the most fruitful political issue of the year has been the wiping out of our quarrel with America over the Venezuelan boundary; and the conclusion, for that is practically reached, of a general Arbitration treaty with the United States, covering all possible disputes save those which impinge on the sovereignty of the two nations. Here, again, Lord Salisbury is entitled to the credit of the statesman who puts his pride in his pocket. But little can be said for his conduct of the earlier stages of the controversy. His dispatch in answer to Mr. Olney contained three grave blunders. It showed no knowledge of the essentials of the boundary question, material for which had been piling up in the Foreign Office for the best part of the century; it displayed complete ignorance of the hold which the Monroe Doctrine has upon American politics; and its conclusion meant war, while neither the Minister nor the country desired war. The Cleveland message, brutal as it was, blew all Lord Salisbury's *papier-mache* work into the air. The Foreign Office committed blunder after blunder. Its blue-book was disfigured by unpardonable errors; the British case was made to rest on the rotten ground of the Schomburgk line, instead of on an exposure of the weakness of the Venezuelan position. However, the Press cleared the ground which statesmen had cumbered. The desire of both nations for arbitration, a desire fostered by

American statesmen in full knowledge of the bitterness of the anti-English feeling in the West and South, was made plain. Lord Salisbury abandoned the Schomburgk line—in the sense in which Lord Aberdeen had abandoned it half a century earlier—and based British rights on a fifty years' settlement. It is probable that if the private side of the negotiations could be told, the country would find that its largest debt was due to Sir William Harcourt, who had the controversy at his fingers' end, and showed at once a lawyer's and a statesman's mastery of its intricacies.

The political consequences of the settlement must be of the widest. The States become Lord Paramount of the two Americas wherever a feeble native Government exists, and, in spite of the quarrel with Spain, which is serious, will probably tend to withdraw more and more from interference with the European system. On the other hand, we shall probably obtain from them a formal acknowledgement of all our treaty and territorial rights on the Continent. Finally, arbitration is definitely added to the operation of general international law. It is America first. Let us piously hope that it will be Europe second.

If the Liberal party welcomes one substantial addition to the law of nations, it has to lament one gross infraction of it. It is difficult to imagine how Mr. Cecil Rhodes ever became an English hero.

"Mr. Rhodes is a modest man," said Sir William Harcourt of him; "he only wants two things—Protection and slavery." It now appears that he wanted a third—namely, his neighbour's territory. The results of his policy have been the Jameson Raid, the Matebele rising, the impoverishment of Cape Colony, and the estrangement of the two white races who virtually divide South Africa. It is hard to believe that on the Liberal side there should have been more than one voice on these unheard-of transactions. It is again largely due to Sir William Harcourt and Mr. John Morley that the right voice over-crowed the wrong. The form and method of the inquiry was practically of their devising, and it was a proper use of the Parliamentary authority which the Liberal leader wields in relation to the two most active figures on the Unionist side, Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain. It is difficult to see how the inquiry can end otherwise than in the revision or the revocation of the Charter.

The evils of Government by Chartered Company were fully foreseen by Mr. Gladstone many years ago when he reluctantly assented to the Borneo grant. In South Africa the question is complicated by the fact that until the Jameson Raid, Charterism united the political and speculative interests of British South Africa. Mr. Rhodes controlled the De Beers Co., the United Gold Fields Co., and the Chartered Co. He owned or influenced the greater

part of the Press of South Africa. Carrying the Premiership of Cape Colony and the almost complete subordination of the High Commissioner to his influence, Mr. Rhodes in turn terrorised and deceived British statesmanship whenever it happened to conflict with his purpose. He had secured the favour of one compact group in Parliament, almost every kind of social influence in England had been swept into the Rhodesian net, and for twelve long months was worked in the light and in the dark in order to induce the British Government to back Dr. Jameson's bill at whatever cost to the peace of South Africa, and to our relations with Germany and other European Powers. And this, in face of the fact that a decently moral and patient statesmanship would have retained for us every advantage which the gambler's throw at Krugersdorp has lost,—the Federation of South Africa, the ultimate purchase of Delagoa Bay, the amalgamation of the great railway interests, so menacing to the future of Cape Colony, and the retention of the Dutch as a sound conservative element, yielding by inevitable degrees to the energy of the paramount race. Well may the strongest imperialist in Great Britain pray to be saved from Empire-makers of the type of Mr. Rhodes.

Before I deal with the Session of 1896 I may say a word on its personalities. It is not improbable that before many months are over England may have to look for a new Premier. Lord Salisbury is

not strong, the work of the Foreign Office, no part of which he delegates, is immensely fatiguing, and he is not, and never will be, a good Premier. He has two public interests—the Church and foreign affairs. He has never exercised a close supervision of the work of his Government, though his veto has been not infrequently exercised. The general result is muddle and indiscretion. The time-table of the Session was made up with the greatest carelessness. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Lord Lansdowne have been openly at war concerning the estimates. Mr. Chamberlain gets scant help from the Treasury for his Colonial policy. The work of the Government wears a general air of haste and bad finish.

It is generally assumed in Conservative circles that the Duke of Devonshire, and not Mr. Balfour, will take Lord Salisbury's place. The choice would not be a bad one; but it would not be pleasant to the *frondeurs* whom the Unionists pushed from their places two years ago. But whether Mr. Balfour or the Duke of Devonshire succeeds, Mr. Chamberlain's destiny remains one of the few picturesque secrets of our humdrum politics. His position in the Cabinet is a puzzle. He is not in the succession to the leadership, for both Mr. Balfour and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach precede him. The best debater in the House of Commons, he gave the Government no help when Mr. Balfour, raked by a close Parliamentary criticism which he never

accurately followed, was wrecking the Education Bill. It cannot be his interest that Toryism of the Chaplin-Cranborne school should become too strong. He is a master of the arts of political management, he has behaved with great firmness and insight in the matter of the Jameson Raid, and yet he does not strike one as having "proved his soul."

As for Mr. Balfour, he seems a man destined to show in turns the strong and the weak sides of his character, but not to exhibit a genuine mastery of the art and business of politics. Intellect he unquestionably has. But what can a party expect of a leader without delight in his work, without ardour, without keenness of scent, without the passion of the enthusiast or the trained doggedness of the man of affairs? Mr. Morley, like Mr. Balfour, has no love for the House of Commons; but then he delights in the platform, in the philosophic reading of democratic problems, and he is possessed by a certain grave pity and sympathy for social perplexities and sorrows. Mr. Balfour is too refined for his vocation, but also a trifle too hard for it; and he suffers eclipse in the fact that he has to do first of all with the man to whom, even more than to Mr Gladstone, the House of Commons is at once a battlefield, a workroom, and a playground. Sir William Harcourt has not Disraeli's genius for politics, but he is probably a better Parliamentarian. He has known the great men of a great

world, he has forgotten little, he is perfectly happy in his work, and he is supremely master of it. The result has been that a powerful Government has more than once been led by a weak Opposition, and that the credit of the Liberal party has been restored and its future to some extent assured.

Mr. Morley, again, has profited immeasurably by his severance from Newcastle and his identification with the larger life of his party. Of Mr. Asquith the superficial remark is that the division of his energies between politics and the Bar weakens him. But he is emphatically a stayer. A strong, steady personality, his workmanship is rarely at fault, and withal he is an honest, simple man of high and pure character. His recent work has not been his best. He has still to learn many of the deeper secrets of life; but he has reserve force of the greatest value. Behind him, at a distance, comes Sir Henry Fowler, a typical Whig in counsel, and also a very characteristic Englishman.

The chief Liberal difficulty is that the front Opposition bench, as in the old Fawcett-Courtney days, tends to be overshadowed by the forces below the gangway. The retirement of Lord Rosebery has increased the strength of Sir Charles Dilke and of Mr. Labouchere. The Rating Bill developed a very remarkable critic in the person of Mr. Lloyd-George; and there are signs of the growth of a new Radical party in alliance with the trade union movement.

Mr. Burns remains isolated, but a power in himself, a personality of singular charm, and also the man who has the best chance of interpreting the new Radicalism to the people. Above the gangway Mr. Haldane most consistently represents the philosophic side of the new Liberalism, and is probably the mediator whom it will choose to make terms with the Labour party.

The withdrawal of the Education Bill—killed by its authors, and buried under the weight of over 1,200 amendments—was, from a party point of view, disastrous to the Government and to Mr. Balfour's reputation as a Parliamentary leader. But it had a deeper significance than this. It was a test of the extent of the reaction of 1895. Clearly, though there is no Radical movement, Toryism does not go deep. The Education Bill was, as Lord Salisbury admitted, based on an attempt to revolutionize our system of elementary education. In place of the State fixing a kind of mild religious minimum, and of the teachers allowing the idea of the Christian story to creep into the children's "study of imagination," the parent was to demand a specific and dogmatic system of State-taught theology. That was the notion at the bottom of the Education Bill, and all the machinery was constructed on that principle—the principle of "capturing," and eventually destroying, the Board Schools. The special Educational authority was to be superseded by the Conser-

vative County Council. The extension of the School Board system was practically stopped. Rival authorities were set up against it. Its expenditure was limited; the better kind of central control—*i.e.*, the stimulating kind—was discouraged. The tone of the authors was avowedly hostile, as was obvious from Mr. Balfour's assent to a statement of Mr Acland made on May 12th :—

Mr. ACLAND: "It was perfectly clear that there were to be no more School Boards in the boroughs; and if they took the rest of the Bill, it was perfectly clear that what was called the alternative system was a system gradually to do away with School Boards."

Mr. BALFOUR: "Hear, hear."

Mr. ACLAND: "The Leader of the House assented to that proposition."

There is nothing sacred in machinery; but it was clear that the alternative system to the School Board was to be a clerically controlled institution, Board Schools and Voluntary Schools being gradually assimilated, until, as the State grants grew, subscriptions virtually disappeared, and the Church, as the lady in possession, at least in the rural districts, became headmistress of English education. If the Bill had been pressed, I am convinced that the alternative policy—especially among those Liberals who do not desire to put Voluntary Schools under any disability—would have been to press for rate as against State aid, coupled with the largest possible measure of control.

But the controversy never got so far. The debates showed that it had been opened with singular recklessness. A majority for the second reading of 267 came to little when it was seen that Ministers did not know their own Bill. The relations between the County Council and the Education Committee had not been thought out, and the nature of the change in machinery had been completely miscalculated. Mr. Balfour himself broke it into fragments when he offered to give an educational authority to every borough which could show a population above 20,000. A further error of judgment was to suppose, first, that it was possible to put the London School Board under the London County Council, and then, that the County Councils in general wanted the powers that were thrust upon them. They soon showed that they wanted nothing of the kind ; while even in Tory boroughs it was found that the School Board was not so unpopular after all. If the Bill had passed, the elementary school system might have gone to temporary wreck. It would have been passed over to hands unfit and desperately unwilling to take charge of it. As a piece of parliamentary management, nothing could have been feebler than the conduct of the Bill. It perished before any one of its proposals had stood the criticism that was preparing for it. It could never have survived such an ordeal ; its authors did not dare to test it so far.

Perhaps the victory of the Rating Bill was more

disastrous to the Government than the defeat of the Education Bill. To make the towns, where all the real increase in rates has come, feed the rural districts, on which none of it has fallen ; to make the poor taxpayer reimburse the rich ratepayer ; to make it perfectly clear, as its landlord author made it, that the nominal relief of rates was designed as a relief to rent—a sop thrown to the grumblers and mutineers who, in country houses and places, where fox-hunters meet, had cursed the Budget of '94 as the farmers used to curse the malt tax ; to talk of a relief to distressed agriculture, and to "relieve" the prosperous grazier, or dairy farmer, or even the speculative builder holding suburban land for a rise—was a feat that only a very shameless or a very dull Parliament could have helped the Government to accomplish. Probably the Government just saved themselves ; the Unionist alliance was just kept intact. But it must have been a narrow escape. The deed was certainly done with what Mrs. Gamp would have called a "bragian" front. When Mr. Chaplin was intelligible, he invariably gave his case away. Liberal criticism was properly devoted to making the Bill square with its profession, which was the relief of "distressed" farmers, instead of with its intention, which was a check-weight on the fall of rent. Every amendment having this purpose in view was refused. Thus :—

Mr. Robson proposed to confine the relief to land rented at £1 an acre. (Refused by 100 majority.)

Mr. Stuart proposed to exempt agricultural land which was really a building site. (Defeated by 236 to 131.)

Mr. Buxton proposed to except accommodation land. (Defeated by 213 to 80.)

Mr. McKenna moved that the Bill apply only to land where the assessment had in twenty years declined at least one-fifth. (Defeated by 179 to 67.)

The Bill was carried by closure, with little discussion. But it was immensely damaged, the vote of the Tory borough members in its favour was given amid more than mutinous protest, and it may mark the decline of Toryism in the boroughs, whose defection in 1885 made the Progressive party a minority in the State.

The Irish question—most mutable of all our controversies—has entered on another phase. The final effect of Mr. Parnell's death has now made itself felt, and his name, so long the symbol of Irish unity, is now a ban and a discomfiture in the ranks of the Irish Nationalists. There is no single Irish party; there is no longer—and in my opinion there ought to be no longer—a hard and fast Liberal-Irish alliance. Mr. Redmond and Mr. Healy have repudiated it, and I doubt whether Mr. Dillon would contend that the conditions of the old close *entente*

with Liberalism remain. That understanding was based on the condition that the Liberal party were able as well as willing to bring in a measure of Home Rule comparable to the measures of 1886 and 1893. That is no longer possible. The House of Lords is entrenched in front of Home Rule, and until that position is stormed and forced the Union is safe. Moreover, the Irish demand is not a democratic so much as a national one ; and when it comes to a question of the interpretation and defence of the lines of Liberal policy, it is certain that Irish sympathies are likely to go out quite as fully to the Conservative as to the Liberal view. Ireland is agricultural and Catholic ; England is industrial and Protestant. The two countries cannot develop on parallel lines of thought or action. Meanwhile, Home Rule has done much of the moral work that Mr. Gladstone desired it to do.<sup>2</sup> It has immeasurably and permanently softened the personal relations between the two peoples ; it has committed the Liberal party to the cause of self-government, and to the promoting of it by such means as Providence and the Tory party place at its disposal. But it has not made English Radicals and Irish Nationalists think alike ; and it never will. Mr. Asquith is one of the ablest of Liberal statesmen, but Mr. Dillon and Mr. Redmond would probably unite in preferring Lord Salisbury to him as Prime Minister of England. Moreover, the Catholic priesthood has

now its direct representatives in the House of Commons in Mr. Healy and his friends; and it, too, is bound to cast a somewhat confusing trail over the old political controversy.

But if the Irish question troubles the Liberal party, it is far more disturbing to the Unionists. The old Unionism has suddenly been torn asunder. It exists to-day in two well-defined camps—the Irish Unionists and the English Unionists. The demand for a separate fiscal system which has grown out of the Childers Commission has revealed the fact that when the agrarian question is out of the way, landlord and Fenian, Orangeman and Catholic, Nationalist and Royalist, can stand together, as they have stood together before. It would not be an unlikely development to see a new Nationalism led by a Tory landlord of genius or initiative. From such a combination democrats like Mr. Davitt might stand aside, but it would have a decisive bearing on our domestic politics. And, again, the grouping together of all parties against England on a question of taxation may be the first step to Home Rule. Already the *St. James's Gazette* has qualified the fierce opposition of the *Times* to the proposal to hand back to Ireland a portion of her taxes with a suggestion to "ear-mark" the whiskey duties. If this plan is followed, the only possible and rational plan would be to imitate Mr. Goschen, by giving Ireland County

Councils, and presenting them with a portion of the whiskey tax as a *dot*. Will Sir Michael Hicks-Beach consent to this? Almost certainly not. But for Unionism the alternatives are serious—almost vital—the alienation of Unionist Ireland, or the equalizing of English and Irish Local Government. Which will it choose?

There can be no doubt, however, that for the Liberal party the event of the year has been Lord Rosebery's resignation. It was more critical in the manner and in the occasion of it than in respect of the loss to which it exposed the Progressive forces. If it was difficult during Lord Rosebery's premiership to describe him as the dominant chief of his party, it was impossible so to regard him after the defeat of 1895. The late Prime Minister desired—and, I think, rightly desired—to make the question of the House of Lords the subject-matter of the appeal to the country. But he did not succeed in impressing his policy and his will on many of his colleagues. No definite line of action had, as a matter of fact, been decided upon in Committee of the Cabinet, nor had the law-officers considered the constitutional side of the proposed campaign; the result of this absence of plan being that the Bradford speech, in which the line of battle was somewhat indecisively laid down, was made without consultation with Lord Rosebery's colleagues. The election went through amid confused appeals, now on this

question, now on that, and there ensued a serious loss of prestige to a leader who had formulated a policy on Home Rule, on Local Option, and on the House of Lords, that had practically been disregarded by his followers.

The opening of Parliament saw even this shadow of authority depart from Lord Rosebery. After the letter in which, for good reasons or for bad, he dissociated himself from Sir William Harcourt, the fighting tactics of the Opposition were arranged in Sir William Harcourt's room. One or two messages were, I believe, carried to Lord Rosebery, and his advice and that of his colleagues in the Lords was sought on the attitude of the party towards the South African Committee. Lord Rosebery's counsel on this occasion was one of negation, and his advice was not, I believe, subsequently sought. His functions were thus restricted to a few *obiter dicta* in a House where Liberalism exists only in a few fitful echoes. His rival, on the other hand, had an atmosphere ideally suited to his powers, a position in which he commanded—and commanded with great skill—the entire fighting force of the party. Such a situation could have but one end, and the wonder is that it did not come sooner. Lord Rosebery's sensitiveness, his life of seclusion, his non-partisan habit of mind, his defects as a man of action—the fact perhaps that, divorced from his old association with London Radicalism, he lapsed into the critical,

rather Whiggish, attitude which represents his permanent temper—all pointed to resignation. Armenia came simply as the gale that detaches the already half-severed branch from the tree.

On the manner and occasion of his resignation much strong criticism has been passed. Lord Rosebery's decision was unquestionably arrived at without consultation with any, even the closest, of his political friends. It was taken in haste, and it threw his party into some confusion. But, after all, a man has a full right to be judge of his own career, and a leader whom his associates had so repeatedly declined to follow might fairly and with honour consider himself absolved of his duty. A stronger man would have declared his policy and invited his colleagues to adopt it. Such tactics would probably have succeeded, and they might have given Lord Rosebery a position such as he can now hardly hope to fill. But the ex-Premier did not pursue this course. He made his criticism, and a powerful and ingenious criticism it was, as a retired statesman. He dealt the Armenian agitation a severe blow; but he furnished its promoters with the retort that it had at least been strong enough to force into resignation the second most conspicuous figure in English public life. On the matter of his speech a clearer verdict can be passed. Lord Rosebery had a perfect right to resign; but it can hardly be said—considering the national and

European situation in reference to his own short and infelicitous association with the Liberal leadership—that he had the moral right to depress the spirit and to weaken the conscience of his party. He had assented to the agitation, he was aware that the only hope of its success lay in its capacity to administer a certain shock of surprise and alarm to the slumbering Concert. To proclaim, therefore, in advance that the English people could in no case go outside a combination of which Lord Rosebery had himself spoken with slight respect, and which had settled down to complete acquiescence in the state of affairs in Turkey ; to deny the treaty rights of his own country ; to repudiate obligations on which he had insisted, and with the non-fulfilment of which a few months before he had bitterly taunted Lord Salisbury ; to declare that British interests in Armenia were as one to nine hundred and ninety-nine other interests—was to say and to do what has never been said or done in the name of the Liberal party since it came into being, and what will never be said or done again.

That the speech was in complete contradiction of Lord Rosebery's earlier policy and attitude in regard to Armenia goes without saying. At Edinburgh Lord Rosebery declared that the Cyprus Convention conferred on us no right of interference ; in 1895 he declared that on it we based our surest hope for the enfranchisement of the Christian popu-

lations of the East. Lord Rosebery, during his Government, intervened under that Convention, as well as under the sixty-first article of the Berlin Treaty, to which he did not so much as refer during his Edinburgh speech. Still less defensible, in view of his earlier declarations, was his utterance in regard to concerted and isolated action. His Edinburgh speech was one of unqualified reliance on the Concert of Europe. In his speech in the House of Lords in the summer he described the concert of Europe as "in reality a Concert directed under the inspiration of the Sultan for putting constraint on the Prime Minister." At Edinburgh he denounced as the act of an enemy of his country any attempt to promote isolated action, even though it stopped far short of war or the threat of war. Such language was clearly out of measure, for throughout the controversy the question of concerted or isolated action has been in the balance, and in the case of Crete it has clearly been shown that isolation, apart from hostility, to the European Concert has been of the highest value. But, as a matter of fact, it has been Lord Rosebery himself who, among our leading statesmen, has been the most consistent advocate of isolation. In the speech to which I have already referred he taunted Lord Salisbury with admitting and exposing England's helplessness:—

"If this is so, if your means are so inadequate,

why did you make the Convention to protect those frontiers? Why did you take the solemn and separate responsibility of the Cyprus Convention for the condition of the suffering Christians in the East? We are now to understand that your means are not equal to it. Was it that your means in 1878 were greater than they are now? You know that they are now twice as great, and you are proposing to increase them incalculably. Why did you not explain to us in 1878 that these stipulations on which we so foolishly laid so much stress and in which we placed so much faith were nothing but a delusion and a snare? The bubble is burst. By a strange irony of fortune it devolves on the noble Marquis, who partly blew that bubble then, to prick that bubble to-day. I do not envy the noble Marquis his position. This is where we stand as the result of 'Peace with Honour'—in an elaborate impotence elaborately declared."

And in the same speech (Aug. 15, 1895) Lord Rosebery definitely declared that if Lord Salisbury found it necessary to proceed "even alone to deal with this question vigorously and efficiently"—no limitation here—he would have the "entire nation at his back." It is true that between this deliverance and the speech at Edinburgh there had come a day or so earlier than the House of Lords oration Prince Lobanoff's declaration against the coercion of the Sultan. But that declaration had relation to our Government's, and presumably to Lord Rose-

bery's, desire to apply force to the execution of a scheme of reform which Prince Lobanoff (and most sensible people) had declared to be unworkable. Even so, it did not come within a hundred miles of a threat of war; and Lord Rosebery's invitation to the Prime Minister was, if necessary, to set himself against the will of the great Powers with a view to bringing them to a better policy. The only shadow of excuse for Lord Rosebery's attitude would have been that there existed on the part of the European Powers, at the period of the Edinburgh speech, a determination to declare war on this country if she took any steps for the fulfilment of her treaty obligations. It is enough to say that Lord Salisbury has made no such declaration and conveyed no such hint; and I understand that Lord Rosebery's assumption at Edinburgh of special knowledge to this effect came as a surprise to the Prime Minister. Such a combination as Lord Rosebery imagines is, in truth, all but impossible. It was certainly not more probable in 1896, when Lord Rosebery denounced isolated action, than in 1895, when he favoured it. It is permissible for the private citizen to give to his own fears the complexion of visible and imminent perils. But that is not the business of statesmanship, and no party with such traditions as Liberalism inherits will ever add to them the enervating legacy of the Edinburgh speech.

There remains to be considered Lord Rosebery's general relation to the party whose leadership he has abandoned. Those (like myself) who in 1894 saw in Lord Rosebery an orator of fine quality, a nature sympathetically, if fitfully, alive to social problems, a sincere, though not strenuous, intellect, and a personality of singular charm, were not mistaken in that particular judgment of him. The mistake was in the belief that behind those characteristics lay the outfit of a man of action, the equipment of an all-round statesman, strong and single in purpose. A harder life might have turned Lord Rosebery into a greater, because a tougher, man. But this has been denied him ; and he has also lacked the knowledge of life which most of our public men have acquired in the House of Commons, in the City, at the Bar or the desk. Lord Rosebery revealed himself, as in his "predominant partner" speech, as a man who spoke infelicitously because he spoke, as Mr. Gladstone never spoke, without any clearly formed policy behind his words, or with insufficient knowledge, as when he practically committed himself in his speech on German competition to the support of the old Protectionist doctrine of the balance of trade. Such mistakes were inevitable, but they were not redeemed by the revelation that the man who committed them was of the stuff that leaders are made of. I sometimes fancy that Lord Rosebery has had in his mind some modification of

the old party system—a modification which he has to some extent introduced in foreign affairs. There was to be a medium party, sympathetic, tolerant, not over-burdened with formulæ, but dowered with a Spirit. Beyond doubt, there was some ground for a semi-Palmerstonian revival—an attempt to catch “the man on the ‘bus’” slightly weary of the strenuous Gladstone. But such a diversion could only be accomplished by a leader of infinite resource, unwearyed energy, complete indifference to criticism, and brutal self-confidence. Lord Rosebery was not such a man; but his thought constantly peeped out behind his party loyalty, and gave to it a play-acting air. The real Rosebery revealed himself with astonishing candour, ability, eloquence, freshness, charm, and all the passion of a reserved nature, in the Edinburgh speech. “*Facit indignatio versus.*” A touch of extremity, of wounded pride, and also, I am convinced, a genuine belief in the national danger, made Lord Rosebery throw off his lendings, and reveal himself for what he was—a high-minded, eloquent, attractive, but sceptical personality; assuredly not a Radical, and not, I think, a statesman of tough enough quality to serve our turn.

The retirement leaves the Liberal party in a condition to realize its assets and its lien on the future. Do they represent a going concern? I think they do. Liberalism in England is no longer Ibsen's

"damned compact Liberal majority." We are not at all compact, and we are in a pretty considerable minority. "Master-printer Aslaksen" and the "Householders' Association" show signs of leaving us, while the workmen are probably less traditionally Liberal than they were a generation ago. A party which cannot hold London, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle, Bradford, and whose most stable following among the workmen are the miners, can hardly claim to speak even for industrial England. Account must also be taken of the fact that the Liberal party is no longer able to offer the young man of talent equal chances of a career, to say nothing of social distinction, with its rivals—even such chances as Disraeli had when he rallied the youth of England against the Whig oligarchs. If English politics were a machine-made business, the downright poverty of the Liberal party would soon doom it to extinction. Its rich men are few, and grow fewer every year; and its Press is not so strong or so united as it used to be.

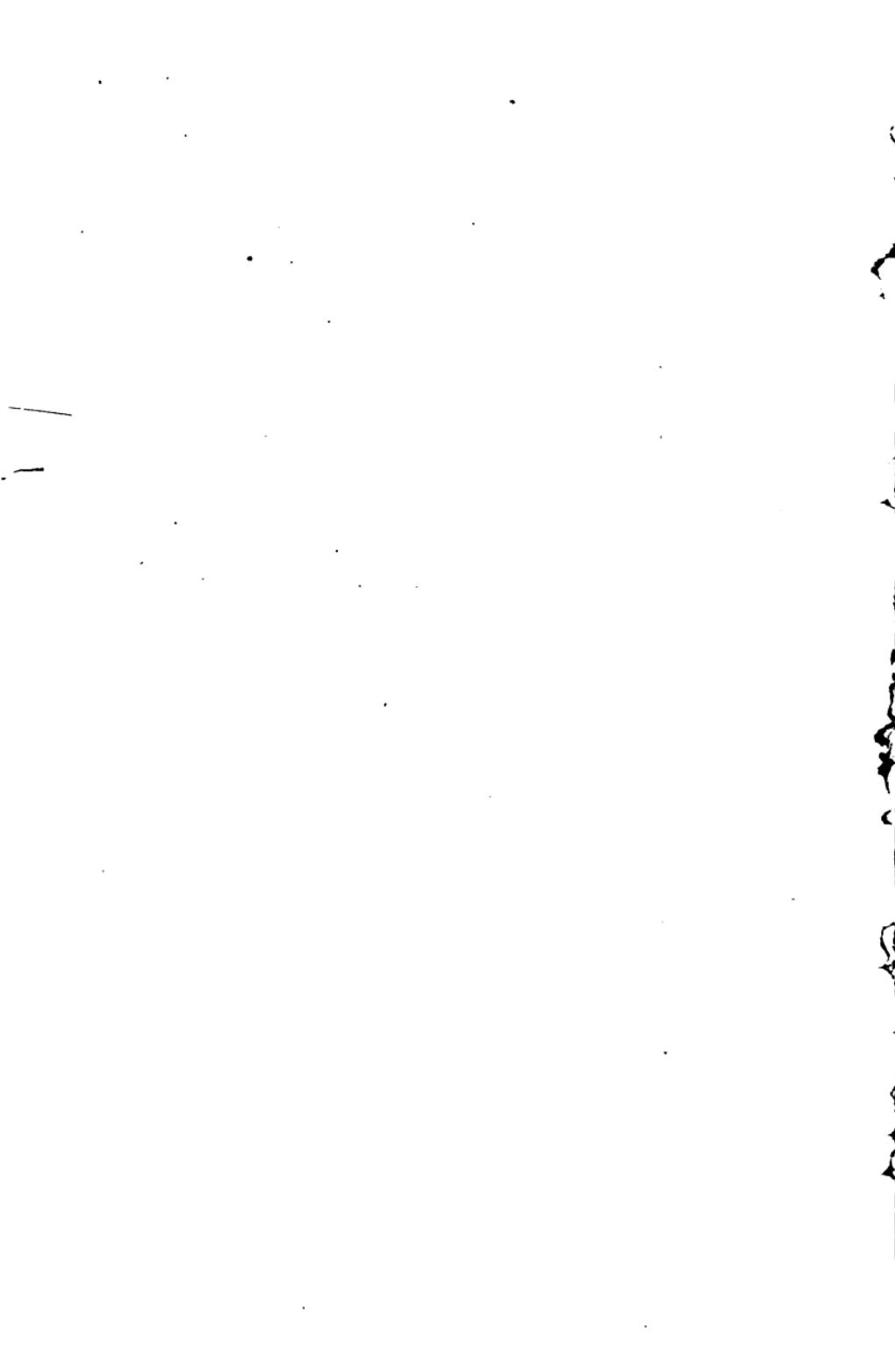
Nor can it claim, as it could claim twenty years ago, that the opposing party can at once be convicted, on its own showing and on its record, of standing on mere privilege and perquisites. Nearly one-half the speculation of the hour goes to whether, and on what terms, the Unionists will take up Home Rule, the Suffrage, Employers' Liability, an Eight Hours Day, the Liquor Question, or Municipal Re-

form. It is here, indeed, that the Liberal chance presents itself. If Liberalism has lost its driving power, Toryism has lost its intellectual stability. British politics are steeped in warm opportunist airs. Everywhere you have the impress of caution and timidity, but also of a certain willingness to hear the democratic case. The question is, How long will a Government of compromise carry on? If the party system is a force deeply rooted in the English character, it will not last for ever. The Church was the mainstay of the Government at the last election, and already the failures of the Session of 1896 have gone far to estrange it. Is the liquor interest ever likely again to tolerate a measure of temperance reform, a matter which Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain have declared to be "ripe for legislation"? Or will Lord Dudley stand the Chamberlain-Forwood Bill of universal compensation for accidents, with a liability perhaps three times as great as that incurred under Mr. Asquith's Bill? It is inconceivable that electoral pledges—never, be it remembered, made with greater effrontery on the Unionist side, and committing the Government to such impossible measures as the exclusion of pauper aliens—can be redeemed without loss of credit or abandoned without loss of honour and support. Every year the functions of Government become more complex, more difficult, and no set of engineers can long be trusted to handle them with complete adroitness.

What, therefore, seems to be required of Liberalism is a service of more efficient, more adroit, and more commanding talent than its opponents possess, the assertion of the principles that underlie the wise, humane, free government of the modern State, and the realisation of the old Liberal watchword, "Liberty," for the workers and the non-possessing classes. It is not my business now to commend those principles, or to state in terms what programme and what methods must replace the Newcastle programme. Personally, I do not think it wise either completely to abandon that loose but suggestive collection of formulæ, or to press at once for a categorical substitute. The Liberal party will have first to measure the precise force and direction of the reaction which produced the ruin of 1895. Thus far it has largely been fruitless. The school system of 1870 has not been destroyed; the Budget of 1894 has not been substantially qualified by a few doles and exemptions in favour of the rural landlord. And, in its turn, the Liberal party has to measure severely its own failure in the sphere of exploration. Compare the average tone and content of Liberal statesmanship with the policy of progressive legislatures in our colonies. Can it be said that, for any one of the problems which have arisen during the past twenty years, a practical and definite solution has been found or even sought? One has only to name workmen's accidents, taxation, the

land question, old age pensions, payment of members, the suffrage, the housing of the poor, the veto of the House of Lords, and higher education, in order to envisage great tracts of almost virgin soil. One would feel more confident if one saw the Liberal party engaged in steady educational propaganda. For even when the whole mass of human selfishness is weighed against us, it remains true that the future is to those who believe that without great reconstructive changes the fabric of modern society cannot endure in happiness and peace.

H. W. MASSINGHAM.



### iii. SOCIALIST

A SURVEY of the United Kingdom from the Socialist point of view must needs be the most unreal thing in the world in any year during which the United Kingdom has not been looking at itself from that point of view. Nations never attend to public business until they are frightened ; and there are only two things that can frighten a rich nation like England : to wit, the contemplation of its own slums, and a threat of war from the great armed powers of Europe. It has lately turned from the first of these to the second. During the eighties the Socialists forced it to look at its slums ; but during the first half of the nineties they struggled vainly against the rate at which it was tiring of that squalid subject. It only needed a war scare to give foreign policy its first serious turn since the bombardment of Alexandria and the death of Gordon. Such a scare came with a vengeance in 1896, upon a generation which, having grown to political manhood within the last ten years, had never before been awakened to the perils of modern militarism by a genuine fright. The prospect of a

war with the United States over Venezuela, with Germany over the Jameson raid, and with anybody or everybody over armed intervention on behalf of Armenia, produced a degree of excitement which no strain in our relations with France over Egypt or with Russia over Afghanistan had been able to provoke during the years when domestic subjects were still the political fashion.

The moment foreign policy comes to the front Socialists are placed in an almost impossible position. For whereas in each separate nation social organization has so far progressed that murder, pillage, and the supremacy of the strong hand are repressed as criminal, in the relations between nation and nation barbarism still prevails. There is no international tribunal for the settlement of disputes; frontiers bristle with bayonets; war, as the source of glory, is defiantly commemorated by monuments expressly designed to remind men of murderous struggles, and to maintain the bad blood they engendered; it is a point of honour not to shirk fighting to extremity for the Fatherland, right or wrong; and peace is maintained much as it is among wild beasts—only by fear and jealousy of “the balance of power.” The relations between the mill-owners of Lancashire and the operatives in their employment leave a good deal to be desired from the social point of view; but they are ten centuries ahead of the relations between France,

Germany, Russia, Austria and England, each of which anxiously counts every ship the other launches, and every cannon it casts, lest it be overmatched in the next fight.

Such a state of things could not exist unless public opinion favoured it. Many Socialists believe that war is a product of Capitalism, and would disappear with it. Many democrats are convinced that the masses are not warlike, and that under their rule war would never be declared. Herr Wilhelm Liebknecht, the leader of the Social-Democratic party in Germany, publicly declared in London last year that if the Alsace-Lorraine question were left to the workers of France and Germany, it would be settled amicably in an hour. The Social-Democratic Federation proposes that the people shall decide between peace and war. But all this is part of that idealization of the proletariat by its middle-class and aristocratic champions which has done so much to keep Socialist societies apart from really typical working-class organizations like the Trade Unions. All classes, in proportion to their lack of travel and familiarity with foreign literature, are bellicose, prejudiced against foreigners, fond of fighting as a cruel sport—in short, dog-like in their notions of foreign policy. It is true that in every class, rich or poor, there is a residuum of “natural philosophers,” artists, vagabonds, adventurers, ne'er-do-wells, poor relations and the like, who are genially

cosmopolitan because, being anarchic and unorganizable, they have no national prejudices or animosities. In large communities these are sufficiently numerous to give the societies which attract them a delusive air of representing the true heart of the people. But the fact remains that Socialism, with its hatred of waste and war, and its sense of the solidarity of the interests of the workers of all nations, is far less representative of popular sentiment on "patriotic" questions than it is on domestic ones, in which it not only appeals directly to the pecuniary interests of the majority, but plays false to its own nature by propagating the bellicose conception of "the class war," and seeking to inspire the proletarian with the most vehement party spirit in his struggle against the capitalist. A most commendable example was set to the world by the Commune of Paris in 1871 by the overthrow of the Vendôme column; yet none of its actions gave more general offence. The world not only replaced the war monument, but has since lost no opportunity of erecting new ones.

The Socialists, still too much wedded to the materialist theories of the Communist manifesto of Marx and Engels, have, as usual, wasted their time and influence on this subject in vain attempts to show that war is a purely economic phenomenon. But no demonstration of the sums of money to be gained by sections of capitalists in the exploita-

tion of a popular sentiment can account for the existence of that sentiment. However convinced we may be that the Jameson raid was organized as a speculation, we cannot flatter ourselves that English popular sentiment would not have rallied as vehemently round Dr. Jameson, had he been successful, as German sentiment rallied round the triumphant Boers. As it was, the English newspapers, before the truth was known, filled their columns for days with the silliest melodramatic inventions as to British heroism at "the battle of Krugersdorp." At other periods of the year we had an almost continuous supply of columns describing the military operations against the Dervishes and the Matabele with modern arms of precision. The more popular the paper the more it wallowed in war.

For some time to come the more we progress the worse will things become in this respect. The advancement of the race, instead of gaining ground for enlightened scepticism as to the glories of war, and horror at its inhumanity, is at present lifting huge masses of labourers, formerly too ignorant and apathetic to contribute anything to public opinion, to a plane on which habits of newspaper and cheap romance reading are possible, the result being the transformation of the ploughman, narrowly but accurately conscious of his parish, into the political idealist, foolishly and vaingloriously conscious of the British Empire. Thus, in so far as the labours of

the Socialist help to produce this improvement, they are the labours of Sisyphus. It is a matter of hard electioneering fact that the Progressive representative whose efforts raise the wages of any section of his constituents from eighteen shillings a week to twenty-four thereby transfers most of their votes with the utmost certainty to the Conservative Imperialist side.

The advance of foreign policy, then, to the front of the political field during the past year has sent Socialism into the background, and has emphasized the fact that except in countries like Germany, where practical Socialism involves a good deal of unachieved Liberalism (the political doctrine to which armed revolution and "the class war" really belong), Socialism still remains far above the heads of the masses, and only maintains its place in politics because it holds the main clue to the material development of industry, and so discovers practical solutions for administrative problems which the Liberals and Conservatives, misled by their obsolete Manchester theories, cannot solve. The Socialist, therefore, holds his own at the Home Office; but at the War Office he has nothing to say except that if the United States, England, France and Germany were organized as Social-Democracies, instead of as competitive capitalist camps, they would not only abstain from fighting one another, but impose peace on the rest of the world. Which,

like most "ifs," is not to the purpose of the moment.

Whether it be true or not that war would not survive its present commercial incentives, the experience of the past year has at least proved beyond all question the impotence to which "the Great Powers" have been reduced by the weight of their own armour and the dread of their neighbours' weapons. Any of these Powers could, if the others would allow it, swallow up the Transvaal or Turkey as a whale swallows a herring. Yet President Kruger has held his own against both England and Germany as easily as England and Germany hold their own against Portugal; and the Sultan has outraged all Christendom without concerning himself as much about the remonstrances of the Powers as the United States army does about a war dance by an Indian tribe. President Kruger's plan has been the very simplicity of duplicity. When he was banqueted in Berlin by Kaiser Wilhelm I., the victor of the Franco-Prussian war, he claimed for his little State the kinship and protection of the German Empire. All the same, the Queen of England remains his suzerain, without whose consent he cannot enter into any foreign treaty. Now, in order to keep the Transvaal Republic to itself, it is only necessary to keep off the Germans and the English. And as the Germans and the English, like all the Great Powers, are mortally afraid of one another,

nothing is easier than to use each to keep the other out. To England President Kruger has virtually said, "Read this sympathetic telegram from our blood relation, the Kaiser, and judge whether he will stand tamely by and allow you to swallow us up." To Germany he has said, "How willingly would we not welcome your intervention were it not for our unfortunate obligation to England, which prevents us from making any foreign treaty except at the cost of war with her for both of us!" Germany and England, therefore, glare at one another, and cry, on the one hand, "A German fears only God and his conscience," and on the other, "Who's afraid?" And President Kruger sits down safely between them, knowing that neither dares fight the other. The moral irony of the situation is completed by the fact that this dread of war, which is its one creditable and humane factor, has to be carefully disguised from the German and English peoples: the latter, especially, openly congratulating the Germans on the fact that Mr. Chamberlain disavowed the Jameson raid before the news of the German Emperor's telegram reached him, as otherwise honour must have obliged the Government to obliterate Kaiserdom from European politics for its presumption.

Those who flatter themselves that what really secured President Kruger's triumph was the general conviction that he had right on his side may be

referred to the case of the Sultan of Turkey. No one can pretend that the public conscience of Christendom was on the Sultan's side. Our anti-Turkish agitators no doubt forgot that the massacres were none the worse because the Armenians were Christians, just as they were none the better because we ourselves happened to be doing much the same thing in Matabeleland. But the very absurdities of the agitators proved the genuineness of their excitement. Even the people who kept cool in the matter, and made nothing of Mr. Watson's boyish poetry, and the newspaper denunciations of "Abdul the Damned," did not want the massacres to go on, and would have felt no remorse whatever if a British shell or two had been dropped into the Yildiz Kiosk to bring the Sultan to reason. But the Sultan received the threats of the Powers with his thumb to his nose, knowing that they dare not move for fear, not of him, but of one another. Finally, Sir Charles Dilke and Lord Rosebery told the nation bluntly that it was too much hated and dreaded abroad to interfere safely. Instantly the agitation collapsed; and we have heard nothing since, except a few cynical speculations as to whether there are by this time any Armenians left to trouble about.

Events, then, have so far justified the implacable contempt of the Socialist for Nationalism, Competition and Militarism, that their imperial virtues of

courage, patriotism, and chivalry have been proved during the year to exist only on paper, the facts pointing remorselessly to ordinary commercial selfishness and cowardice. The humane horror of war, which broke forth so promisingly at the threat of a conflict with the United States about Venezuela, has proved quite compatible with a merry interest in the most sanguinary episodes of the Chino-Japanese war; and the Concert of Europe, an ideal thoroughly acceptable to International Socialists, has broken down utterly in the cause of Christianity, not to mention humanity.

Happily, the result of all this is a more healthy state of public feeling. In England we are always canting; and though we feel comfortably complacent when appearances support our cant, our condition, if less happy, is wholer when overwhelming facts sharply contradict us and force us to look at things as they really are. Ignominy in Europe and ridicule in Africa are excellent tonics for the flabbiness of Imperialist bluff; and if we have discovered that we are not popular in America or on the Continent, without, this time, being able to feel quite sure that we are disliked for our superiority, so much the better for our manners. The same process of disillusion has been going on in home affairs. There has been no special social pressure to compel the Government to make the best of itself. Trade has been

good, and unemployment at its lowest figure. Of course there are the usual horrors. Investigations into sanitary areas in the West End of London tell us of 42½ per cent. of the population living two or more to each room, 10 per cent. four or more to a room, 6½ per cent. under "terrible and appalling" conditions.<sup>1</sup> The criminal law is still savage and frightful, dealing out monstrous sentences of penal servitude with callous recklessness; uselessly starving, flogging, and tormenting our wretched moral invalids; and shooting the runaways like mad dogs in the savage struggle to keep our hewers of wood and drawers of water honest by making imprisonment worse for them than "freedom." But all this is customary, and does not personally inconvenience the classes whose discontent cannot be dealt with by a mixture of alms and police-batoning. Respectability at eighteen shillings a week and upwards has been able to make both ends meet, and even overlap: consequently there has been no market for revolutionary doctrines, and no political pressure.

The effect of this on the Government and on the hopelessly-outnumbered Opposition, with the next General Election still five years off, may be imagined. The effect on the Socialists is to withdraw from them the following with which discontent, unem-

<sup>1</sup> *Life in West London.* By Arthur Sherwell. (Methuen & Co.)

ployment, and privation provide them in hard times. There are a few wise people who turn to Socialism before they are hungry, just as there are a few people who go to the dentist before they have the toothache. But in what are called good times the Socialist realizes his numerical insignificance, and must turn from the excitements of agitation and mob-leadership to serious educational work and to wire-pulling for administrative reforms which lie far outside the consciousness of popular audiences, and which depend a good deal on the individual consciences of Ministers and public officials, and on the pertinacity, tact, and information of a few reformers. Such reforms, from the point of view of a year-book, belong to the history of the Government which carries them out.

The educational efforts of the Socialists are becoming less and less sectarian as it becomes more and more apparent that the obstacle to Collectivism is not so much ill-will as the stupendous public ignorance of the average Englishman. His political consciousness consists of a bundle of naïve traditions and obsolete ideals, backed with an assumption that our present plan of leaving our industries to the chances of the competitive scramble, is no mere interval of confusion between the old order, founded on rank and supernatural religion, and the new, founded on equality and secular religion, but the eternal and inevitable result of "human nature."

This blunder, though it makes him hostile to Socialism, operates not through his misunderstanding of Collectivism, but through his illusions as to the system under which he lives—that is to say, the alternative to Collectivism. It is hardly too much to say that when an average University graduate of to-day is asked to state his ideas of the difference between the England of 1896 and that of George III., he is fluent on the subject of railways, telegraphs, ironclads, and the penny post, whilst in industrial and political organization he has nothing to mention except a questionably judicious extension of the franchise and toleration of Trade Unionism. Within the last ten years alone there has been an enormous extension of democratic Collectivist machinery; but the nation, for the most part, still contemplates its new County Councils and Parish Councils and reformed Vestries as helplessly as a savage might contemplate a present of a magazine rifle. These bodies have been captured in all directions by the party whose avowed object is to prevent their being used to supersede joint-stock speculation in public needs, or to improve the standard of life among the workers by raising the wages and shortening the hours of their employees. Here and there some local body shows what the others might do if the people knew how to use them. The cases in which the public organize and control their own gas or electric-light-

ing, tramways, water supplies, and lodging-houses, increase in number, and are generally accompanied by some improvement in the condition of the employees; but it cannot be said that these things have been much in the air in 1896. In London there has been open reaction, several members of the County Council and Vestries, elected as Progressives, becoming bolder and bolder in their anti-Progressive attitude, until finally, on the question of the London Tramways, they joined the enemy in sufficient numbers to throw back the municipalization of that service for several years.

Even where the Progressives have held the field and stuck to their colours, what has been done is the merest trifle compared to what might have been done. It is clear that what is lacking is not a further dissemination of that quaint body of superstition formerly known as "scientific socialism," with its doctrines of the Class War, Surplus Value, and so forth, but simply the instruction of the citizen in the powers and functions of the authorities dependent on his vote, and some grounding in ordinary political and economic science. So far, it has not been perceived that a nation which commits itself to Democracy as we have done stands also committed to make citizenship the pivot of its educational system. We still follow the routine evolved from the old conception of the school as a place of apprenticeship for grammarians

and "learned men." Under these circumstances the foundation in 1896 of a School of Political and Economic Science in London, with regular professorial courses for students, scholarships, and a public library, must be noted as a significant event of the year from the Socialist point of view. It is also to be noted that the best organized courses of Socialist lectures delivered throughout the country are now closely assimilated to ordinary University Extension lectures on Political Science and History, and are, in fact, attended by persons of all shades of opinion as courses of instruction in citizenship, without any reference to revolutionary Socialism as understood by the veterans of 1848-71. One effect of this has been to create a demand for books dealing with social questions. These are supplied partly by the booksellers and public libraries, and partly by the circulation of numbers of "Fabian book boxes." The books, mostly by non-Socialist authors, are the ordinary ones used by students of social questions, and are circulated with the object of combating popular ignorance of industrial organization and political and economic science, and not in the least with a view to inducing their readers to join Socialist organizations. This apparent disinterestedness on the part of a Socialist Society is, of course, really founded on the calculation that men will be Collectivist in proportion to the development of their

political consciousness, and intolerant of the existing order in proportion to their information concerning it. And since nobody now-a-days—nobody who counts, that is—is literally Conservative, nor anybody seriously insurrectionary, or nervous as to revolutionary consequences, Socialism is tolerated in a capable political or economic lecturer as easily as clericalism is tolerated in a schoolmaster.

In the relations between the established political parties and the Socialists the strain between Collectivism and Liberalism has been steadily increasing. There has been no response on the part of the Liberal leaders to the Collectivist appeal for a genuinely modern policy. They are still sulking with the country because it has left them far behind; and even the growing activity of the Independent Labour Party at the polls only strikes them as insolent ingratitude and foolish playing into the hands of the Conservatives, with whom they dispute in an obsolete way, not seeing that the Government is no longer their opponent on principle, but simply their rival in popular favour. Indeed, the fact that the Conservative party has rid itself frankly of all dogmatic political doctrine stamps it as the more advanced of the two for the moment; and though in some respects it is crudely and childishly corrupt, from the popular point of view, especially when the landed gentry and the clerical interest send in their bills, yet its opposition to

working-class measures is very amateurish, and, so to speak, "gentlemanly," compared to the matter-of-fact ruthlessness of the Liberal manufacturers, who know far better what industrial reform means to second-rate "captains of industry." These gentlemen, though capable of succeeding as employers when they can obtain cheap labour and abuse its endurance recklessly, are bound to lapse into the ranks of employees when the State forces up the standard of life among the wage-workers by industrial legislation. It is their inveterate Manchesterism that has reduced the Liberal party to its present pass. The Socialists took advantage of its six years of opposition, from 1886 to 1892, to foist on it the Collectivist manifesto known as "The Newcastle Program." With this they carried the election of 1892; but, as Lord Rosebery has since admitted, they had much better have left it alone; not, however, as Lord Rosebery implies, because the program was unpopular, but because it became apparent, the moment the Liberals took office, that they had fought under false colours, and were determined that the program should be dropped the moment it had served its electioneering turn. In 1893, when the Socialists brought the Liberals to book, the Liberal Press, led by the *Daily Chronicle*, defended the Government and denounced the Socialists with something like desperation. In 1895 the Liberals were at last forced by an overwhelming

defeat at the polls to realize how far they had sunk in public esteem. The other day, in some remarks on Mr. Gladstone's 87th birthday, the *Daily Chronicle* not only admitted, but disgustedly affirmed, that the history of Liberalism since 1880 has been a history of wreck and ruin, the reasons assigned and the view taken, even to the exact date of the turning-point, being that given by the Socialists long before the *Daily Chronicle* had given up hope of its leaders. 1896 may, therefore, be taken as the year in which the open contempt with which the Socialists have for ten years treated the pretensions of the Liberal leaders to represent progressive ideas, or even contemporary opinion, has now spread to the Liberals themselves, and left the party with absolutely no political assets except the quarrel between their rival leaders, Sir William Harcourt and Lord Rosebery—a quarrel in which no ideas of public interest have been staked by either party. Yet, in spite of the efforts of the Independent Labour Party, there is no avowedly anti-Liberal Collectivist party in Parliament.

The Liberals, therefore, are still the Opposition, in which capacity, having no real difference of principle with the Government, they fall back on the provoking formula that "it is the business of an Opposition to oppose." No doubt if the Opposition did not oppose, the calculations of the constitution theorists would be upset. But why not upset them?

It is the business of a thief to steal: if he did not, the calculation that 16,000 policemen are needed for London would be upset; but is that any argument against honesty? The analogy is obscured only by the traditional Liberal assumption that a Conservative Government must in the nature of things propose reactionary measures, and that the simple fact of resistance must constitute the Opposition a progressive one. The assumption, however, is absurd now-a-days. Nothing whatever can be postulated as to the desirability of the measures introduced by any Government, Conservative, Liberal, or, for the matter of that, Socialist. It therefore behoves an Opposition to be very wary in stepping beyond its true theoretic business of representing minorities on clear party issues.

This was shown at the very outset of the year, when the Government introduced an Education Bill in which a remarkable application was made of one of the most successful recent experiments in municipal Collectivism. When the first School Boards were established, they attracted a body of educational enthusiasts, who came in on the wave of Liberalism in science and religion of which Darwin and Huxley, Helmholtz and Tyndall, Matthew Arnold and George Eliot, were the apostles. But when that generation retired, and the ardour of the literate for education had settled down into popular grumbling at the School Board rate, the defects of

the system began to assert themselves. The Radicals of the cities clamoured for a School Board in every country parish, forgetting that in most country parishes there is not human material for anything better than a board of farmers much more hostile to the education of the labourer's children than the parson and squire, though perhaps less so than the labourers themselves. Even in the towns it became apparent that a body elected solely for educational purposes could not permanently attract enough able and disinterested educationalists to make it trustworthy. In London the Board degenerated rapidly and disastrously. When the London County Council came into existence, it formed a committee to deal with Technical Education; and this committee, consisting of a majority of ordinary councillors elected for general municipal work without any special reference to education, and a minority of co-opted auxiliaries selected from without, achieved, under the chairmanship of Mr. Sidney Webb, a character for popularity, efficiency, and complete freedom from sectarian squabbles, just when the London School Board had exhausted the patience of all practical statesmen by making itself a cockpit in which petty Churchmen and Nonconformists, and fanatics of the most impossible type, wrangled over the souls of the unfortunate children committed to their care, whilst the teaching staff was stinted and the clerkships shamelessly jobbed.

The object lesson thus presented pointed to the abolition of School Boards, and the vesting of the educational authority in the hands of committees similar to the Technical Education Board. Accordingly, the whole importance of the Education Bill introduced by Sir John Gorst on behalf of the Government last year consisted in its provision for these two changes. The Liberals, missing the point, as usual, instantly attacked the Bill with the utmost fury on the ground that it was a party move against the Nonconformists in the interest of the clergy of the Establishment; and the Government thought it safer to allow the Bill to recommend itself to the Conservatives on that ground than to risk a revolt against it (which, nevertheless, actually took place) by confessing that it must really stand or fall by its value as an instalment of Municipal Socialism. The clergy, on examining the Bill more closely, no doubt saw what the Liberals failed to see: namely, that their salvation by the proposed measure from the risk of being superseded by a School Board—a risk very unreal to many of them—would be purchased at the cost of a division of their authority, and its subjection, in a very considerable degree, to the local and central educational departments. And it was probably not lost on them that the offered increase in the income of the schools would not only have to be paid for with increased efficiency, but that

the privilege of calling the tune must inevitably tend to pass more and more to the officials who paid the piper: to wit, a body of London civil servants, socially quite independent of country parsons. Consequently the Government was soon able to say what all Governments like to say to the unlucky Minister who has been reluctantly included as a specialist in popular legislation—that is, “Nobody wants your confounded popular reforms, after all: better drop them, and let well alone.” Sir John Gorst and the Bill were accordingly thrown over in a manner that left nothing to be desired by admirers of nonchalance, with a broad hint from Mr. Balfour that when the subject is reintroduced early this year, the Government will confine itself to securing the endowment of the Voluntary Schools under the existing system. The Liberals may therefore be sarcastically congratulated by the Socialists on having destroyed precisely that part of the Bill which would have finally more than compensated them for the still inevitable and wholly desirable subsidy to the Voluntary Schools.

In dealing with the Agricultural Land Rating Bill the Liberals were equally unhappy. The Bill was simply a proposal to relieve the pecuniary distress of the holders of agricultural land by paying half their rates for them out of the Imperial Exchequer for the next five years. In short, the Government, not caring to violate Free Trade by Protective

duties on agricultural produce, gave the landlords a bounty instead. It is not so easy to oppose a proposition of this kind as it was before 1880. On the face of it there is no reason why the Government should not endow agriculture, or any other industry, as well as scientific research or education. Certainly, it is a violation of *laissez faire*; but *laissez faire* is now so hopelessly reduced to absurdity by social experience that this, on the whole, is a recommendation rather than an objection. A bounty is also an interference with Free Trade; but as the very first principle of Progressivism is resolute Protection for the fundamental commodity in the market—labour—the Free Trade doctrine cannot now be conveniently presented in its old Manchester form—even if any of our statesmen still remembered how to handle it effectively. The old Liberal doctrine that grants from the Imperial Exchequer in aid of local taxation lead to waste and extravagance is now received as a discredited survival from extinct political conditions and from an obsolete anti-Collectivist theory of government. Mere chatter about “a dole to the landlords” is not to the point. It may be as sound public policy to give the landlords of England a million and a half a year as it certainly would be to give the labourers of England more than fifteen times that sum in old-age pensions. Yet the Liberals could only use these old-fashioned argu-

ments or else sit silent; and the result was that they entirely failed to make any impression on public opinion. Though their sense of combating a monstrous measure with flawless logic on unassailably orthodox ground was never deeper, nobody was interested. The whole debate was a bore; and the public was content to let the landlords take their money and have done with it.

As to the rest of the Session, there was a considerable improvement on the unashamed factiousness of former parliaments, especially in respect of the Irish Land Bill. Mr. Morley, instead of following precedent by denouncing his own Bill on its reproduction by the opposite party, supported it as readily as Mr. Asquith supported the Miners' Bill. Both the Land Bill and the Light Railways (Ireland) Bill were interesting, from the Socialist point of view, as fresh violations of Freedom of Contract and *laissez faire*. They empower the State not only to step in and settle the terms of a bargain over the heads of the contracting parties, but to guarantee payments, advance capital, and so forth, with as little regard to Whig political economy as Edward III. might have shown. And this has become so usual that no one dreams of making any remark on it.

In July an International Socialist Congress was held in London. As a huge assembly of exceptionally clever, lively, and unconventional people

from all countries and all classes it was more interesting personally than any other sort of political Congress could have been ; but as a deliberative body it was ridiculous, its proceedings frequently rivalling the most farcical "scenes" of the House of Commons or the French Chamber. The main difficulties were the confusion of tongues and the unsatisfactory constitution of the Congress. A sufficient staff of professional translators, having no interest in the proceedings except the earning of their fees, is the first requisite of any International assembly. The Socialists appoint about four of their own number, all vehement partisans, to cope with work that would tax the energies of a dozen experts. Naturally, the fairness of the translations is questioned from the first ; and after a few days the translators become so worried and exhausted that their versions of the speeches are not worth the inordinate time they occupy. The constitution of the Congress is full of anomalies. Any Trade Union, no matter what its views may be, can send delegates ; and Socialist societies can be represented provided they free themselves from suspicion of Anarchism by declaring their belief in parliamentary action. There is no limit to the number of delegates admissible from each society. "Branches" of societies are entitled to separate representation. Thus a gigantic Trade Union may send one or two responsible delegates, whilst any

three or four casual persons, by calling themselves a Socialist society or "branch," may appoint each other delegates, and attend in a body. A single delegate, on the invitation of some society in a country not otherwise represented, may vote as "a nation," and sit as "a section." These are not possibilities merely: they actually occur, and are abused without scruple by the party which can depend on the support of the Standing Orders Committee. The Anarchists, when expelled by a vote of the Congress after several days' violent wrangling, can produce alternative credentials as representatives of Trade Unions (whose delegates are privileged to hold any opinions they please), and retain their seats precisely as before. The official proceedings of such a body may, therefore, be dismissed as worth very little except to comic opera librettists.

Nevertheless, the International Congresses are of real importance as a means of enabling the leading men in the movement to judge one another's calibre, and that of their following. In this way the 1896 Congress made it clear that a very notable advance is taking place in the adaptation of the Socialist movement to modern conditions. Socialism has hitherto always been too far behind the time to gain a serious footing in the actual political world (as distinguished from the political dreamland), except in moments of

confusion. On the Continent its date in 1848 was 1789 ; in 1871 its date was 1848 ; in England the Social - Democratic Federation has not yet advanced beyond 1834. It is Rip van Winkle posing as the Man of the Twentieth Century ; and it cannot understand why the impersonation is a failure. This year's Congress, however, showed that the younger leaders are perfectly aware that the old-fashioned "scientific Socialist," with the first volume of Marx's *Capital* as his entire, infallible, and sufficient library—his Bible, in short—and his revolutionary shibboleths, is now much more hopelessly out of date than the Whig, whose work of political reform, though nearly accomplished in England, is still the most immediate business of the Social-Democratic party in Germany. The rising generation of Socialists seems not only more numerous but much better instructed, less sectarian, and freer from romantic illusions as to the existence of an ideal proletariat in sympathy with the movement, than any previous generation. There is a significant passage in William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, in which, drawing straight from the life, he describes the Socialist leaders as men of many sympathetic and sometimes brilliant qualities, but without administrative ability. Consequently when, in the story, "the revolution" comes to business, they have to give way to a new generation. What Morris felt ten years ago all the

younger men feel to-day. Nothing keeps the old melo-dramatic ideal alive in the movement to-day but the want of those Liberal reforms in the political constitution of Germany which have been effected in England. The growth of the new spirit provoked the passionate manifesto against the German Social-Democrats presented to the Congress by Herr Landauer, whose adherence to the old revolutionary tradition has resulted in his crossing over from the Socialist party to their opponents the Anarchists. He contemptuously denounces the Social-Democrats as parliamentary compromisers, double-dealers, *bourgeois* reformers, and so forth. It is not many years since this attitude would have been in the height of the Socialist fashion. A direct expression of the more modern attitude came to the Congress from England. The manifesto presented by the Fabian Society not only implies the most decisive repudiation of the pretensions of the old Marxites (among whom Marx himself cannot fairly be counted), but makes explicit affirmations which are quite new in the history of the movement. The passages on the Referendum and on equality of wages, hours and authority are particularly unexpected ; and the following samples are unprecedented in official Socialist literature :—

The Fabian Society is perfectly constitutional in its attitude ; and its methods are those usual in political life in England.

The Fabian Society accepts the conditions imposed on it by human nature and by the national character and political circumstances of the English people. It recognises the fact that Social-Democracy is not the whole of the working-class program, and that every separate measure towards the socialization of industry will have to compete for precedence with numbers of other reforms. It therefore does not believe that the moment will ever come when the whole of Socialism will be staked on the issue of a single General Election or a single Bill in the House of Commons, as between the proletariat on one side and the proprietariat on the other. Each instalment of Social-Democracy will only be a measure among other measures, and will have to be kept to the front by an energetic Socialist section.

The Fabian Society does not suggest that the State should monopolise industry as against private enterprise or individual initiative further than may be necessary to make the livelihood of the people and their access to the sources of production completely independent of both. The freedom of individuals to test the social value of new inventions ; to initiate improved methods of production ; to anticipate and lead public enterprise in catering for new social wants ; to practise all arts, crafts, and professions independently : in short, to complete the social organization by adding the resources of private activity and judgment to those of public routine, is, subject to the above conditions, as highly valued by the Fabian Society as Freedom of Speech, Freedom of the Press, or any other article in the charter of popular liberties.

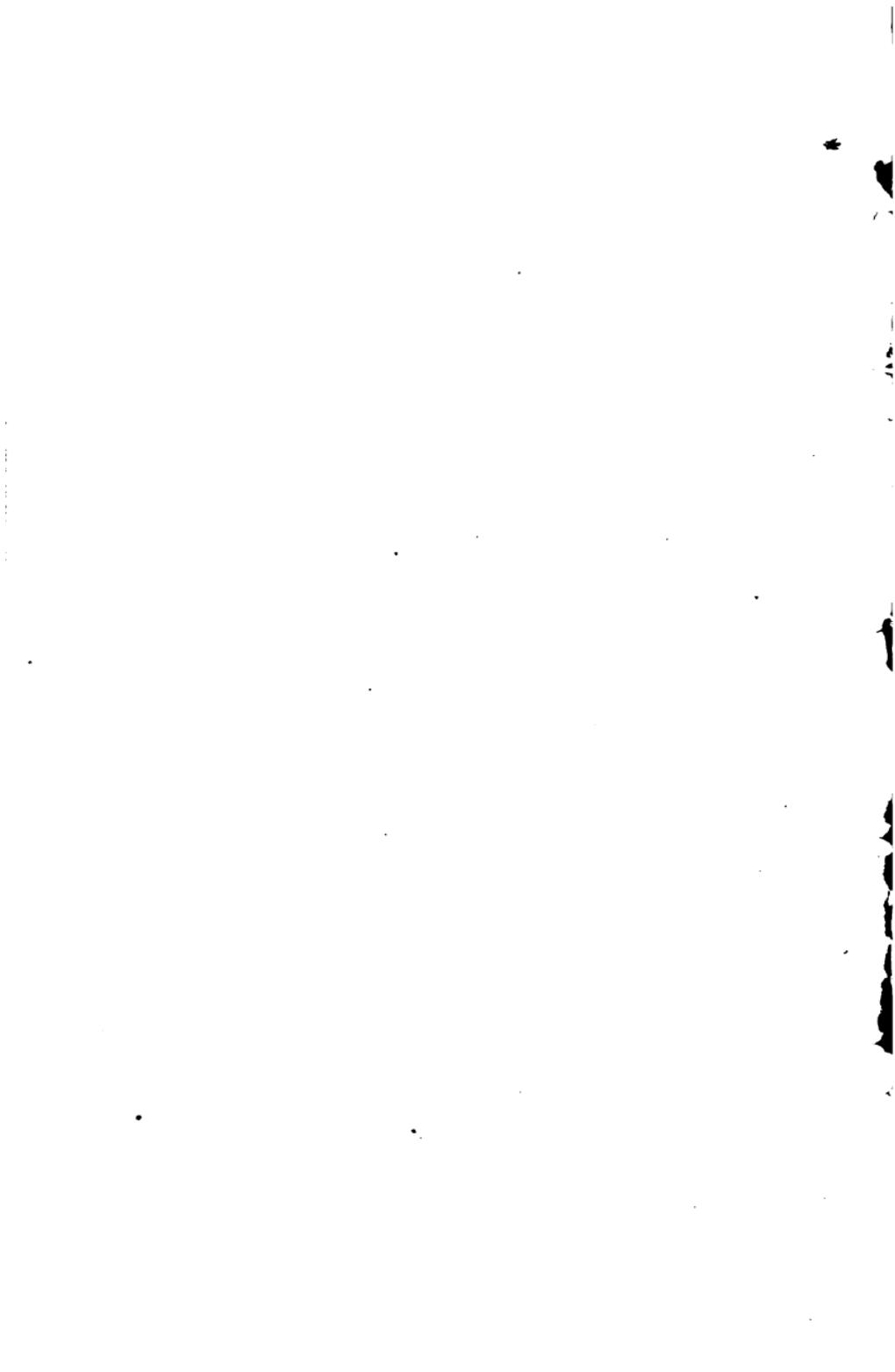
This was the only pronouncement of any significance from English Socialists in England in 1896. It was expected that the German Social-Democrats would at last come to some decision on the agricultural question, which was forced on them a

few years ago by their total failure to gain any followers outside the towns. This was hardly to be wondered at, as the old "Marxite" doctrine had led them to the conclusion that the peasant proprietor and agricultural labourer must be abandoned to their inevitable fate of starvation and final extinction by the evolution of capitalistic agriculture. This economic fatalism naturally did not rouse the enthusiasm of the German peasantry; and a program of agricultural reform was at last proposed. It was adopted by the French Socialists, the English ones having been already brought to their senses on the subject. It was nevertheless vehemently rejected by the German leaders as heretical until the Breslau Congress of 1895, when they recanted and supported it, without, however, bringing round a majority of their followers. Accordingly, at the Gotha Congress in October last, the executive of the party simply informed the Congress that steps had been taken for the publication of a series of tracts on the agrarian question. The publication of a pamphlet on the semi-feudal law concerning domestic servants (including farm labourers), and an agitation for its abolition, was then agreed to; and the subject dropped, the leaders having taken their own way as usual in spite of the vote of 158 to 63 against them at Breslau. There is no autocracy like a democratic autocracy.

The Socialists have lost during 1896 three of

their best-known writers: William Morris, Stepniak, and E. F. Fay, a journalist who made some mark in the movement as a humorist, and who was best known by his pen name, "The Bounder." Morris's *Message of the March Wind*, *Dream of John Ball*, and *News from Nowhere*, all three masterpieces, were produced for a Socialist newspaper called *The Commonweal*. It may interest collectors to learn that at the time of their appearance it was not always easy to sell the numbers containing them for a penny. Later on they fetched five shillings easily. Their present value is, no doubt, considerably higher.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.



## II. FOREIGN AFFAIRS

WHEN we look back on the international policy of 1896 the first impression is one of unreality. The main issue has been a false one. It is true that the policy of all the principal Powers has pivoted on a single point—the attitude of Europe towards the Sultan and his Christian subjects—and it should, therefore, be easier than usual to disentangle the motives and the results of each nation's action. If this is not the case, it is because the whole question has been fictitious and irrelevant. No Power had anything to gain by putting pressure on the Sultan to amend his government ; all had much to jeopardize. Knowing this, all, with the notable exception of Britain, were sincerely desirous to keep out of what neither concerned them nor promised them any advantage. That they have, nevertheless, found themselves obliged to devote a year of futile diplomacy to the affairs of the Eastern Christians is due to Britain and to the Sultan in pretty equal moieties. Had Britain not committed herself, partly through sentimentality and partly through infirmity

of purpose, so deeply that it is now impossible for her to retire from the question without well-nigh intolerable humiliation, the other Powers might have been left free to pursue their own true interests, as they would have preferred to do. Had the Sultan had the wit and the grace to see that continued massacres should not afford pretext for continued intervention, the Continental Powers might again have been left with leisure to mind their own business. Neither this country nor the Sultan was temperate enough to let the unprofitable and undignified farce alone. Therefore Europe blames the pair of us impartially for a barren year, and Europe is right.

It is not, of course, the business of this country to make itself loved in Europe. It is its business to make itself envied. We are accused in perfect good faith all over the Continent of fomenting the Armenian question, to the great suffering of the Armenians themselves, in order to distract the attention of our rivals from schemes which they might otherwise work to our disadvantage. Now if the year's diplomacy at Constantinople had borne any fruit, either directly, in securing benefit for Britain, or indirectly, in diverting others from projects prejudicial to our influence, we could have endured the reprobation of Europe, as we have endured it before, with great cheerfulness. But it did neither the one thing nor the other. Direct result of the

incessant procession of ambassadors and dragomans from Pera to the Yildiz, and from the Yildiz to the Porte, there has been absolutely none. Its indirect result has been hopelessly to discredit this country throughout the whole world, and to hand over Europe and Asia to the unprofessed but undeniable dictatorship of a rival.

Take, first, the direct results of the Armenian agitation — or rather the absence of them. One success, indeed, the Powers achieved in connection with the reforms in Crete. A rising, such as periodically varies the politics of that island, broke out in the spring. A provisional Government was formed. There were the usual conflicts of Christians and Mahomedans, the usual excesses on the part of the Turkish soldiery, the usual desultory but severe fighting. On the whole, the Christian faction had the best of the exchanges, which fact in itself disposed the Sultan to conciliation. The ambassadors came to an agreement as to the reforms to be demanded from the Sultan, and he granted them. A Christian vali—Georgi Pasha—was appointed for a term of five years. He has the right of veto upon all acts of the National Assembly — consisting of forty Christians and twenty-five Mahomedans — except constitutional changes, and also the appointment of subordinate officials. A two-thirds majority of the Assembly is needed to enact a change in the constitution; for

other uses a simple majority is sufficient. Elections for the Assembly are to be held biennially. The proceeds of taxation are to be divided equitably between the Porte and the island. The judicature and police are to be reorganized under European supervision. On the promulgation of this constitution, under the guarantee of the Great Powers, the fugitive deputies returned from the hills and from Greece, the Christians laid down their arms, and tranquillity was restored.

Now if the unanimity of the Powers thus succeeded in setting at rest this turmoil, with all its possibilities of dispute with Greece, why, it may be asked, should the efforts of the ambassadors be called barren? Unquestionably this settlement was a service to good government in Turkey and to peace in Europe. Yet it would be very easy to exaggerate the efficacy of European intervention even in this, its most efficacious manifestation. To begin with, is it so certain that without European intervention the rising would have taken place at all? Beyond doubt this outbreak—as well as others during the year in Macedonia and Syria—was strongly stimulated by the idea that reforms were going, and that it was a pity Crete should lose her share for want of a little shooting. It is true that in this case the Powers interested themselves to satisfy the aspirations they had themselves called forth, instead of leaving them, in the traditional

manner, to be slaked in blood. But, after all, this only means that in the particular instance of Crete the Powers, if they did harm, at least repaired that harm. If, indeed, there was any reason to suppose that the new constitution would ever come into force, we might go further and congratulate ourselves on a real benefit to one part of the Turkish Empire. But will it? The scheme of reform outlined was communicated to the Cretan Assembly on September 1st. On January 3rd of this year Reuter's agent telegraphs thus from Constantinople: "The Council of Ministers has reported favourably upon the proposal to admit the foreign element to the Cretan gendarmerie, but the Sultan refuses to give his sanction." It is four months since the promulgation of the new constitution: Ministers are still reporting, and the Sultan is still refusing. And so, in a see-saw of reports and refusals, the matter will ineffectually drag on till the whole thing is forgotten.

In short, it needs a very great deal more optimism than most of us can command to expect that the newest and most improved paper constitution will ever put a piastre of extortion back into the pocket of any one of the Sultan's subjects. And if the diplomacy of Europe has done little for Crete—where it has, at least, been united and nominally successful—what are we to say of the Armenians? In this case the Powers have been at perpetual variance,

and are likely so to continue, while no single one of them can claim even a nominal success. To put it plumply, Europe has during the past twelve months done nothing whatever for the Armenians. Fewer may have been killed in 1896 than in 1895, but that is because there were fewer left to kill. Yet, with liberal deductions for the habitual exaggerations, the number of lives lost in the rioting at Orfah and at Eguin must have been considerable; while for the massacres of the end of August in Constantinople trustworthy estimates put the number of victims above 6,000. If the ambassadors could not save these wretches in the heart of the capital, what possible expectation of saving their kinsmen in the remote valleys of the Taurus?

But if we wish to be quite candid and brutal we must go even further than this. Not only has Western intervention done the Armenians no good: it is directly responsible for nearly all the miseries they have suffered. Our moral guilt may be less than that of the Sultan, but this is not the place for considerations of morality. If it were, it would be easy to show that the Armenians, in the long run of their career of usury and general swindling, have probably caused a great deal more suffering than they have endured. It would be easy to show that the fanaticism of Mr. Gladstone and Canon McColl is of much the same quality, only three hundred years more civilized, as the fanaticism of the Softas

who beat out the brains of Armenians in the alleys of Stamboul. But such considerations are not now to the point. We are now asking what Europe, and especially Britain, has done for the Armenians; and the answer is not one to be proud of. The first massacres at Sassun were of an isolated character; there was no reason to believe that they were intended to be the first of a series, or that if Turkey had been let alone they would not have closed the incident. For an incident is exactly what they were—a very usual incident of Oriental rule—an insurrection fomented by professional Armenian agitators from the Russian province, suppressed with the pitiless severity of an Oriental despotism. Sassun was wiped out, and there the matter would and should have rested. But as soon as the agitation took root in England the case was altered. On the one hand, the Armenian revolutionaries perceived that it was to the interest of the propaganda to provoke fresh massacres; on the other hand Mussulman sensibilities were aroused by what appeared an attack on the Faith, and they took revenge on the instigators of that attack after the manner of the stage of civilization at which they stand. The Sultan—not unamiable, on the whole well-meaning, but an utter coward—lost his head, and killed right and left like a terrified wild beast. The more the ambassadors threatened, the more hopeless was his panic and the more bloody the murders. The case of the massacres

in Constantinople was a typical one. The Armenian outrage at the Ottoman Bank would have maddened a population with far more pretence to the self-restraint of civilization than the Turks of Stamboul. That outrage would never have been perpetrated had not the Armenians reckoned on European support. The Turks avenged themselves promiscuously on all Armenians, guilty or innocent. Such revenge would never have been taken had not the Turks believed—what turned out true—that the Powers would attempt to shield the criminals from the consequence of their villainy. The responsibility is about equally divided between Turks, Armenians, and Europe. But perhaps that of Europe is a shade the heaviest, because Europe is enlightened, and sins, or rather commits foolishness, against the light. If the first massacres had been let alone, the others would not have followed. The more Notes the Powers present, the more bombs Armenians will throw, and the more throats Turks will cut.

But is it not horrible that this wickedness should be, and Christian England raise no finger to check it? No doubt it is most horrible. But Christian England should lay to heart that she is not as yet omnipotent, and that only omnipotence can order the world to its liking. Short of that eminence, a nation that wishes to do good must behave like a private person in the same case—consider what it is possible to do and what harm is likely to mix itself with any

good that is attainable. Now what can Great Britain do? What can united Europe do? If one thing is more certain than another, it is that the Sultan is determined not to reform his administration. In the first place, he dare not commit any initiative to anybody but himself; in the second, he has left himself no good men to carry reform through. His diplomatic system is simple, but its simplicity is akin to genius. He never affronts the Powers to the point of compelling them to retrieve their self-respect by war. Short of that he refuses everything, and even when he yields the yielding is a farce. He promises and does not perform; what could be easier? Europeans may be sent to supervise reforms in the interior; but what can they do when it is as much as any man's head is worth not to impede them at every turn? So long as the Sultan exercises sovereignty in the provinces of Turkey no European can exercise it. And without that supreme power no effort will avail.

There are, then, only two possible courses. Either the Sultan must be deposed or Europe must let him alone. There is no need to discuss such puerile middle courses as Mr. Gladstone's proposal to withdraw our ambassador. That would damage us, no doubt, but how could it do any earthly good to anybody? Now if we choose the first alternative—the deposition of the Sultan—what is to follow then? Either we must put a new Sultan in his place or

we must divide Turkey among the European Powers. The new Sultan must be of the present Imperial family ; otherwise his subjects will never obey him for a moment. Unfortunately the Imperial family does not at present offer anybody much more fitted for the position than Abdul Hamid himself. But even if it did, the substitution of him for the present occupier would probably mean war, and would give no possible guarantee of better government. Without doubt the enormities of the present Sultan are directly traceable to the fact that his immediate predecessor was deposed, and that he is in hourly fear of a like fate. Would a second deposition be likely to seat the next Sultan any more confidently ? On these three grounds, therefore—that deposition would mean war in Turkey, which would probably cause far more misery than a generation of Armenian persecution ; that there is no suitable candidate to set up in place of Abdul Hamid ; that in any case the change would as likely as not be for the worse—it seems that this plan must be rejected.

What now of the partition of Turkey ? The only difference is that this plan would probably lead to war all over Europe, instead of only in Turkey. It may be said with confidence that no single Power wants to take up any portion of the Turkish Empire, but at the same time is yet more firmly resolved not to let other Powers do so. Take our own case. We hold Egypt already, and would have

no objection to regulate our position there as part of our share in the swag. But that alone would be a very small share; and what should we say if Russia took Mesopotamia, and established an arsenal at the head of the Persian Gulf? We do not want Mesopotamia in the least. But we would sooner undertake the burden ourselves than see it pass into the possession of a naval power; and none but a naval power could ever propose to occupy it. Even France in Syria would not be altogether pleasant; there is quite enough French coast on the Mediterranean already. Austria might take Macedonia, at the price of perpetual revolts and the undying hate of Servia, Bulgaria, and Greece, and wish herself out of it in a week. As for Albania, what nation would take it at a gift? And, finally, what about Constantinople and the Dardanelles? Are they to be handed to Russia, that she may maintain her monopoly of the Black Sea along with perfect liberty to descend into the Mediterranean? Certain ironical humorists have proposed to make Constantinople a free city under joint guarantee, but they have prudently refrained from outlining a County Council to govern that seething scum of all the turbulent rascality of the Levant. In sum, a partition of Turkey is utterly impracticable at the present moment, and, failing partition, the best thing for everybody is to let Turkey alone a while longer.

No doubt the Powers would months ago have

come to that conclusion. But now they have staked their reputation on wringing some sort of concession from the Sultan, and for the sake of that reputation they dare not confess their impotence. After weeks of diplomacy they obtained in 1895 the right of keeping two gunboats at Constantinople instead of one, with the sole result that there were more Europeans to look on helplessly at the massacres of August. The past year has seen no such triumph apart from the Cretan reforms, unless the dubious financial reforms now afoot may be reckoned such. Yet there is no doubt that these wholly ineffective diplomatic successes can be won, if they are thought worth winning, provided that the Powers are unanimous. But just here comes the difficulty. The Powers are not unanimous, and it is probable, all assurances notwithstanding, that not at one single moment have they been unanimous. First one takes the lead, then another; and as surely as one comes up into line another falls out of it. Austria took the lead in the Cretan business, France in the finance question. But, taking the dreary performance all through, Britain has most pressed on and Russia has most held back. The death of Prince Lobanoff and the Emperor's visit to Western Europe seemed for a moment likely to open the way for a real European concert, which might be able, under cover of reforms promised, if unaccomplished, to withdraw with credit from the impos-

sible position. M. de Nelidoff was said to be coming back in Constantinople with a settlement in his portfolio. But he has now been back for weeks, and the other ambassadors still await the settlement. Why not? Russia has no interest in a settlement. She cares nothing for the Armenians, and she can well afford to wait while the fruit ripens. The better the government of Turkey the less the chance of Turkey becoming Russian. As it is she commands Constantinople in a military point of view; while diplomatically, thanks to a certain amount of double-dealing, she has the advantage of having saved Turkey from the other Powers by refusing to allow coercion in earnest. She exercises a virtual protectorate over the Sultan, and will wait an opportunity when the Powers are occupied elsewhere before she cares to change it for a more acknowledged authority.

The conclusion appears to be that the new chapter of the Eastern question had better never have been opened, and had better be closed as soon as may be. The efforts made by this country to secure better administration in Turkey were foredoomed to failure, partly because the Powers were not unanimous on the point, while the Sultan is a master of playing one against the other, and partly because, even had the most magnificent of constitutions been promulgated, there could be no guarantee of its effective realization. As it is, we have

caused unspeakable miseries to thousands of innocents, both Armenian and Turk, while the real criminals of both nationalities have gone free. No drastic solution of the difficulty is possible in the present state of Europe, and the sooner this country goes back to its own business the better for everybody. There may come a day, with a Sultan of rudimentary honesty and nerve, when a purified administration may develop the vilayets of Asia by roads, railways, telegraphs and industries—a consummation which would do more to check faction fighting and atrocities than a thousand joint Notes. There is much sound stuff in the unofficial Turk. Before the Armenian, the Greek, and the Jew have taught him to lie and steal he is upright and industrious. That he has any immediate chance of putting these virtues into operation is unfortunately not apparent. Yet, apparent or not, the Turk remains the best hope of Turkey, and it is high time that we owned this to ourselves.

The indirect result of the Armenian negotiations has been as little profitable or honourable to Britain as the direct. It is not merely that we have lost our influence in Turkey, though that we have done utterly, what little of it was left. Having shown ourselves neither friends to be trusted nor enemies to be feared, we have deserved our fate. In future no English need apply for concessions in Turkey, nor need they expect anything but obstacles in the

path of their trade. But the influence of our exhibition of impotence has spread much further. No nation gives us credit for sincerity and philanthropy, but all have exulted over our rebuff. There was little doubt that a very strong body of public opinion in this country would have applauded strong coercion of Turkey, but that coercion was never applied because Russia forbade. Naturally this has not increased our authority abroad ; as naturally it has exalted that of Russia to the highest. For Russia, indeed, the year 1896 has been a continual triumph. The fruits of years of patient, clear-sighted work have appeared in every quarter of the world together, and Russia stands out as the semi-official arbiter of Europe and Asia. To be allied with her is glory enough for a great nation ; to incur her frown is to incur the pity and lose the respect of the whole world. The coronation of Nicholas II., and his subsequent journey through Europe, came as an apt outward expression of this acknowledged primacy. At the coronation august envoys from all the satrapies brought gifts, while the unrecognised yet hardly less real vassals vied with each other which should send the most honourable ambassadors. On his tour the Emperor was feasted by Austria and flattered by Germany ; he was welcomed in England with hushed awe as a possible saviour of the Armenians, while Paris received him in a delirium of joy and adoration.

Nor were there wanting more solid signs of the advantages which Russian policy is harvesting on every hand. She has played in the Armenian tangle as adroit a part as Britain has played a fatuous one. She has allowed the Sultan to keep Turkey in the distracted state which best suits her policy, at the same time making it clear to Abdul Hamid that he is the Emperor's man. It is not exactly a Russian success that the change of ruler in Persia places on the throne of that country a prince who to all appearance is a bondslave of Nicholas II.; but the accident is not inopportune, and it calls attention to the steady Russification of Persia. In the far East, Russia has not allowed the squabbles at Constantinople to deter her a moment from her designs on China. The secret treaty with that Empire, denied for months, is now denied no longer. Russia has used to the full the leverage gained by her happy inspiration of warning off Japan after the war, and of putting the obligation on a permanent basis by a loan. To what extent the published provisions represent the real treaty it is not very easy to say. What is certain is that there is a treaty, and that the Siberian railway is to run through Manchuria to Vladivostok. It is hardly less certain that some sort of territorial occupation will follow on pretext of protecting the line, and that by the time fixed for the optional purchase of the railway by China

it will be running through Russian territory. Established at Kirin, Russia will be on the flanks of Peking, even if a branch line does not immediately, as is beyond doubt intended eventually, bring her down to Port Arthur, or even to the capital itself. It is alleged that the treaty gives Russia the right to occupy Port Arthur should she be at war. Right or no right, she would certainly take it, once its land communications were assured. Thus to-day Russia finds herself within sight of the ice-free port which has been the goal of her policy for so long. She has even the choice of many such. For during the year she has laid a quiet but sure foundation for the Russification of Korea. The capital has been occupied by marines and the person of the King seized; who thenceforth has been a puppet in the hands of the Russian minister. The usual military instructors and the usual school for young nobles appeared duly and almost immediately. The occasion for this act of annexation, as it virtually was, was furnished by a ministerial crisis, conceived in the true Korean spirit, whereat the outgoing statesmen were beheaded in the street. Yet, though the victims had been appointed by a Japanese envoy in the interests of his own country, Japan made no resistance to Russia's action. On the contrary, she appeared to acquiesce in the cynical appropriation of that which

she had given much blood and treasure to possess.  
Is Japan also among the Russophiles?

Passing back to Europe, we find the end of the year equally auspicious for Russia. On the one side, her alliance with France has been strengthened. A succession of events—the most significant of them being the resignation of M. Berthelot, Minister of Foreign Affairs, because his action did not meet with the approval of the Russian Chancellor—has shown that there is no limit to the obedient devotion of Russia's ally. On the other side, the opposing coalition, the Triple Alliance, has been loosened by more than one heavy blow. The first shock to its stability came from its head, the Kaiser himself. The year was not three days old when that august statesman startled Europe by a telegram congratulating President Kruger on defeating Dr. Jameson's raid, "without waiting for the help of friendly powers," and on "maintaining the independence of the country against foreign aggression." This language could only bear one interpretation, and, though this has been since disclaimed, it is impossible not to believe that it was intended at the time to convey the fullest implications of which it was capable. These were : first, that the Transvaal is an independent country, qualified to contract alliances with foreign powers; second, that Germany was such an ally, who might properly be called in to the aid of the burghers; and, third, that had

such a call been made, the Kaiser would have responded to it. The significance of this telegram, grave enough in itself, became still graver when it was known that the German Government had actually asked permission of Portugal to land a force at Delagoa Bay. It was inevitable that all this should be regarded in this country as a deliberate attack upon our paramount position in South Africa, and resented accordingly. The sequel need not be recounted in detail ; it is sufficient to say that the despatch of warships to Delagoa Bay, and the addition of a small squadron to the British fleet in commission, induced a more pacific frame of mind on the part of the German Government. Yet, though the breeze died away, it was sufficient to ruffle the Triple Alliance. It was the most important, though far from being the first, sign that Germany was minded to pursue an active foreign policy of her own, which might easily bring her into relations, whether of friendship or hostility, which might be exceedingly inconvenient for the other members of the Triple Alliance. Italy, in particular, had reason to be perturbed. With the estrangement of Germany from Britain vanished the last hope that, in the event of a war between the two great Continental combinations, the British fleet might protect her coasts from France. Such protection neither Germany nor Austria is in a position to lend, and, with her own fleet neglected and falling behind, Italy had

little reason to make herself comfortable in the Triple Alliance.

The next blow fell directly upon Italy. The opening of the year had found her arms unsuccessful in Abyssinia. Defeated at Amba Alaghi, and obliged to evacuate Makalleh, the Italians retreated northwards, followed by the army of the Negus, Menelek. The next stand was made at Adigrat, where a small Italian force was besieged by a host of Abyssinians. General Baratieri, the Italian commander, had his headquarters near Adowa, some fifty miles west of the besieged post. Here, at the end of February, he was faced by a great Abyssinian army, outnumbering his 20,000 men fourfold. Despite this vast disparity, General Baratieri resolved to attack. The movement, rashly determined upon, was faultily carried out. The four Italian columns became entangled among mountains and ravines, where one could not support the other. Attacked and surrounded in detail, they were utterly defeated. Fifty-two pieces of artillery fell into the hands of the Abyssinians; the killed and wounded numbered 7,000. The battle of Adowa was the death-blow of the African forward policy, and led to a peace with Menelek, by which Italy binds herself to make no further aggressions upon his independence. With the African policy fell Signor Crispi, the chief supporter of the Triple Alliance. Italy is sick of war and of military taxation. Whether the

Marquis di Rudini, his successor, has renewed, or will renew, the Triple Alliance on Italy's behalf is not definitely known. The moment for its denunciation, if it is to be denounced, comes in May of this year. But, in any case, military expenditure is to be reduced, and this, together with the loss of military reputation in Abyssinia, so far reduces the value of Italy to her confederates.

A curious side-light on this affair is thrown by the relations between Menelek and Russia. It had long been notorious that the Abyssinians were supplied with arms and ammunition from the French port of Obok, just south of the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. Further significance was given to this fact by the sudden discovery in Russia that the Greek and Abyssinian Churches were nearly allied on certain doctrinal points. They are not in the least; but the matter was considered important enough to warrant embassies both to and from the Negus to discuss the interesting subject. After the battle of Adowa, philanthropic Russia conceived the happy idea of sending a Red Cross mission to tend the Abyssinian wounded. The wounded must have been either dead or convalescent long before the gentle ministrations could reach them, and the nurses attached to the expedition turned back on the way. The army surgeons, however, went on, and it was no way surprising at a later date to find Menelek announcing the conclusion of peace by

telegraph to the Emperor Nicholas and President Faure. Still less surprising was it to hear later rumours of the cession of a port on the Red Sea to Russia. This has not yet come to accomplishment, nor would such a port be of any great strategic value until the Russian navy is in a condition to defend it in war. Yet the whole episode is eloquent of the adroitness and success which incessantly characterise Russian diplomacy. And there can be no doubt that this side of the African business has caused serious thought in Rome. The hostility of Russia and France is in a very large measure responsible for Italy's humiliation at the hands of Menelek, and there are more unlikely stories than the persistent rumour that Italy is half disposed to reconsider her position and make terms with the Dual Alliance.

Another event, not exceedingly important in itself, is possibly significant as a further sign of modification in Italian sentiment. On the last day of September Italy and France concluded a treaty on the subject of Tunis. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the French occupation of Tunis has been responsible more than any one cause for the strained relations between the two Mediterranean powers. Even to-day, after fourteen years of French protectorate, there are almost as many Italian residents in the country as French. The circumstance, therefore, that Di Rudini felt himself able to conclude

a treaty abandoning the immunity of Italians from the jurisdiction of the Tunis courts, and securing in return no commercial advantages not shared by other powers, seems to show that Italian sentiment towards France is undergoing a change. Italy recognises the accomplished fact of French rule in Tunis, and with the renunciation of this grievance, the way is opened to a more cordial understanding than heretofore.

If we turn from Italy to the third member of the Triple Alliance, we again seem to detect the seeds of dissension. There has been no open misunderstanding between Germany and Austria, but the revelations made by Prince Bismarck in the autumn cannot fail to beget a feeling of mistrust and constraint between the allies. These revelations briefly amount to the confession that, during the first years of the Triple Alliance, up to the time of Prince Bismarck's dismissal from power in 1890, Germany went behind her allies, and maintained a secret understanding with Russia. It is true that this understanding merely provided for a "benevolent neutrality" on the part of either power in case the other was attacked. It is also true, and more to the point, that this agreement was not renewed by Count von Caprivi, and has therefore been for six years a dead letter. But with these deductions freely made, the fact remains that the revelations of Prince Bismarck are not likely to add to the

popularity of Germany and of the German Alliance in Austria—less still in Hungary, where the memory of the Russian invasion of fifty years ago is still rancorously cherished.

For Russia, then, the past year has been wholly triumphant. She has reaped success in every part of the world. Her European position has been consolidated, while the antagonistic combination has been weakened for the time, even if it has not contracted the germs of dissolution. Meanwhile, what part has Great Britain taken in relation to the two alliances? That Lord Salisbury has not tied his hands by any definite adhesion to either may be taken as absolutely certain. Nevertheless, the year's history presents certain facts which might be taken to imply a slow gravitation away from the Triple Alliance, and an approach towards a more cordial understanding with the Dual.

Relations with Germany, at any rate for the early part of the year, have been uneasy. They were bound to be as long as the situation in the Transvaal was an acute one. The development of that situation, even after a year's lapse, is still too well remembered to need review. It is sufficient to say that, while, from the European point of view, Dr. Jameson's raid deserved no better success than it encountered, it was not wholly unjustified according to the political traditions of South Africa. But, even so considered, the affair was hopelessly

bungled, and the defeated had incurred the consequences. Dr. Jameson and his principal officers have been punished, not, perhaps, too severely, but certainly with a severity quite out of proportion to the nominal extent of their sentences. So far as they are concerned, the episode is at an end. The case of the Outlanders in the Transvaal, whose grievances the raid was intended to redress, is not so simple. They forfeited the consideration due to law-abiding citizens by their attempt at revolution; they forfeited the respect due to resolute men by its pitiable collapse. Yet there are one or two facts which appear to give them a kind of claim on the British Government. Their surrender was brought about by British officials speaking in the Queen's name. The most powerful argument used by these gentlemen was to the effect that on their surrender depended the lives of Dr. Jameson and his men. Now it has since turned out that Dr. Jameson only surrendered on the Boer commandant's guarantee of the lives of the whole force. President Kruger thus contrived to be paid his price twice over, and he shortly took the occasion of exacting a third price also. All the leaders of the Reform Committee were arrested, and only liberated, after several grotesquely vindictive sentences had been successively imposed and remitted, on the payment of fines amounting in the aggregate to £200,000. Two men alone, Messrs. Davies and Sampson, hold-

ing that they had been tricked into surrender by false pretences on the part of Mr. Kruger, and by implicit, but unredeemed, promises of protection on the part of the British Agent, refused to petition the President for mercy. They have now been in a filthy goal at Pretoria the best part of a year, and are apparently like to stay there for life. With the payment of the fines into the Boer treasury, and its prompt disbursement for fortification and Krupp guns, the episode of the Reform Committee also closed.

There remains, however, the general question of the status of British subjects in the Transvaal and the enforcement of the Convention of London—a question, however, with which the Colonial Secretary does not appear over-anxious to grapple. It must be allowed, on Mr. Chamberlain's behalf, that the proceedings of Dr. Jameson and of the Reform Committee were not the happiest prelude to an attempt to secure better treatment for men of British birth in the Transvaal. During the first half of the year he was mainly engaged either in soliciting Mr. Kruger's magnanimity or in thanking him for the exercise of that politic and marketable virtue. But, while allowing fully for the great difficulty of Mr. Chamberlain's position, the fact remains that in one of his very earliest despatches he undertook to maintain the Convention of London. Now this Convention had been for many years broken by the Boer Government—in spirit, if not in letter; and

with treaties, if not with domestic laws, the spirit is of more importance than the letter—in respect of Articles 13 and 14. The first of these clauses provides that "no other or higher duties shall be imposed on the importation into the South African Republic of any article coming from any port of Her Majesty's dominions than are or may be imposed on the like article coming from any other place or country." In the face of this article, the Netherlands Railway has been able to carry German goods from Delagoa Bay to Pretoria duty free. The facts that this is contrived by a rebate allowed in Europe, and that it is nominally done by the Railway Company instead of by the Government from which that Company derives its powers, can hardly be held to annul the contention that this is a distinct and habitual breach of treaty. Clause 14 of the Convention of London runs thus: "All persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic (a) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic. . . . (d) They will not be subject in respect of their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are, or may be, imposed upon citizens of the said Republic." The latter provision has been broken habitually by the imposition of heavy taxes upon the mining industry, upon im-

ported food-stuffs, and upon business transactions, all of which the pastoral Boer escapes, while the commercial Outlander has to pay. It may, of course, be answered that, in the eye of the Transvaal law, all men are equal, and that, if a Boer took to gold-mining, he would have to pay like another. That may be perfectly true. But practically taxation falls almost wholly on the Outlander, and that with such a grievous and wanton weight that the revenue of the country exceeds its normal expenditure by no less than 50 per cent.

But whatever defence may be urged in respect of section (*d*) quoted above, there is none for a more recent and more flagrant violation of section (*a*). Since the close of the troubles of January, full in the face of Mr. Chamberlain's declaration that he would uphold the Convention at all costs, the Transvaal Government has passed two Aliens' Acts in flat violation of the Treaty. In virtue of these, the authorities of the Transvaal claim the right either to expel from the country, or to turn back from its frontiers, any person they may consider an undesirable inhabitant, without any proof that he has failed to conform to the laws of the Republic. To this the Volksraad has added a Press Act of mediæval severity. This shows that the reigning clique at Pretoria has no intention of relaxing the exclusive institutions of the country. Yet against the direct violation of the Convention he is pledged to uphold,

Mr. Chamberlain, so far at least as is known, has offered no word of protest.<sup>1</sup>

The position of the Colonial Secretary, and in his person of the British Government, is thus not one of supreme dignity. On the other hand, but for their explicit declarations, which are going unfulfilled, it is fairly arguable that the present is not a suitable moment for bringing matters to a head. In the interests of South Africa it is well that a period of quiescence, even though there be no real unity at heart, should succeed the distractions of the present year and restore the ravages of several native wars and of the rinderpest. Time is on our side. The development of Rhodesia will furnish a British counterpoise to the Transvaal, while within the Republic itself the British element is likely to grow stronger. The very rinderpest will help, as it must needs break down the stock-keeping oligarchy which stands for the aristocracy of the Dutch Republics. With time the two races may fuse and harmonize. But it must still be the work of Britain to see that the united South Africa of the future develops itself, on the whole, under her flag, with her language, and in the spirit of her institutions. Absorption of Dutch by British it would be neither just nor politic to aim at; predominance of the British element is our right and our necessary duty.

<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to remark that such protests would probably not be made public, the success of the "New Diplomacy" not being brilliant up to the present.

With the passing away of the acute phase of the Transvaal trouble, the blackest clouds of ill-will between ourselves and Germany blew over likewise. Yet things are not the same again, nor will they be for many years. When the Kaiser sent his telegram, he forgot that the commercial antagonism between the two nations disposes them to be natural foes. The daily sight of German clerks in City chop-houses and aerated bread shops does not give rise to diplomatic incidents, but it leads to a very much deeper seated and more dangerous, because more suppressed, bitterness. The Germans as a people are hated in England, and you cannot say the same of any other people—whether French, Russian, or even Turkish—at the moment of the very tensest irritation. The smallest spark was enough to set this tinder in a blaze ; the telegram was the spark, and the tinder is smouldering sullenly yet. Germany is not otherwise disposed to us than we to her : all the year her soberest, nay stodgiest, newspapers have been breathing out threatenings and slaughter against us. The action of either Government, however, has been correct and tactful, and there is no reason to fear difficulties during the present year. The German Government has especially refrained from factious opposition to our proceedings in Egypt, which it might easily have offered, and which would have lost it no popularity either at home or abroad.

One small difficulty has arisen in connection with Zanzibar. Towards the end of October, the Sultan, Hamid bin Thwain, died very suddenly ; from the fact that he was immediately buried at two in the afternoon, it is inferred that he may probably have been poisoned. In any case, his cousin, Khalid bin Burghash, was opportunely on the spot ; he proclaimed himself Sultan, and seized and fortified the palace with a strong force. According to German accounts, Khalid was the idol of Zanzibar, but he was not the British candidate. Warships appeared before the palace, and on the refusal of Khalid to comply with an ultimatum, it was bombarded and destroyed. Khalid escaped to the German consul, and was subsequently smuggled across to German East Africa, where he still is. The German authorities decline to surrender him on the ground that he is a political refugee. Britain is, of course, the last Government which can complain of a refusal on such grounds, if they are justified. But Germany on this point has certainly gone counter to the general practice of European peoples in dealing with Africa : what, for example, would have been said of us if we had taken the late Prime Minister of Madagascar on board a warship and refused to give him up ? The harbouring of fugitive African princes might easily become gravely embarrassing to many Powers if it became the etiquette of Africa. In the matter of Zanzibar, then, Germany appears to have

allowed her desire to glorify herself in the eyes of the natives of East Africa at our expense, to run away with the sense of European solidarity which ought to be the first influence with all white Governments in their dealings with Africa.

At the same time as the opening of 1896 saw strained relations with Germany, it was marked by signs which were taken to indicate a diminution in the occasions of dispute between this country and the Dual Alliance. An agreement was concluded with France in respect to Siam, which, as it was severely blamed in both countries, may be plausibly held to have conferred no undue advantage on either. It may be roughly summarized as dividing Siam into three spheres of influence. Everything west of the Menam Valley is in the British sphere ; everything east of it in the French ; the central valley itself is mutually guaranteed in respect of independence and of equal commercial facilities for both nations. The French sphere is larger than ours, and apparently more valuable, while the Menam Valley, which is all that is guaranteed inviolate to the King of Siam, constitutes but a small portion of the whole country. It is, however, the most valuable part of the country, and probably as much as the King of Siam can conveniently govern ; at any rate, it was reported from Bangkok that His Majesty was quite satisfied with the arrangement.

But the better understanding with France, if it

ever existed, was jeopardized by the determination of the British Government to advance up the Nile and reconquer Dongola from the Khalifa. It was not unreasonably supposed in France that this movement must delay the date of British evacuation. It must be owned, also, that our Government has never given any very clear reason for determining upon the advance at that precise moment. Something was said about making a diversion in favour of Italy, who, at that time, was suffering under the defeat of Adowa and hardly able to maintain herself in Kassala. But later it appeared that she was only holding Kassala not to disoblige us, so that the argument is not exceedingly convincing. It was also explained in one breath that the safety of Egypt demanded this attack on the Khalifa, and in the next that the enterprise was perfectly safe because the Khalifa's power was already crumbling to its fall. But although the speeches of different members of the Government did not hang over happily together, it remains indisputable that Britain could never safely evacuate Egypt, so long as the Khalifa remains unbroken. France, perhaps naturally, but very perversely, did not see matters in this light. The French and Russian Commissioners opposed the use of £500,000 from the Caisse de la Dette for the expedition, and their opposition was upheld by the International Court of Appeal. The result, it is to be hoped, may help to

convince France that her factious policy of starving Egypt in the interests of the very prosperous bond-holders is not likely to hasten British evacuation. Lord Salisbury, with admirable promptitude, advanced Egypt the necessary half-million, and this country now has an indisputable lien on territory reconquered with our money. The conquest itself was carried out, under the masterly direction of Sir Herbert Kitchener, Sirdar of the Egyptian army, with a happy blend of dash and caution. The dervishes were shattered in two fights which produced a great moral impression in the Soudan, and Dongola was occupied towards the end of September. It is probable that an advance in force upon Khartoum will be made next summer, in which British troops will be largely used. Whether this will mean the hastened evacuation of Egypt—whether indeed Egypt will ever be evacuated—it is difficult to say. But it is certain that the evacuation could never be prudently undertaken with the Khalifa established at Omdurman—and as certain that if the Soudan is reconquered by British troops and British money, we are not likely to evacuate without some return for our trouble and expense.

There remains only one other of our great controversies—the dispute with the United States. This has been happily settled by the reference of the Venezuela boundary to restricted arbitration, with the corollary of a Treaty establishing a permanent

tribunal for arbitration. From the latter we need not expect over much. Arbitration can never supersede war in all cases until there is a possibility of finding an impartial arbiter, and of applying a body of international law which shall possess an indisputable authority, and something more than a lukewarm moral sanction. From this Treaty, therefore, we need not expect more than the easy settlement of small disputes, which could in no case bring danger of war. Yet, even so limited, the Treaty is warmly to be welcomed. A small dispute will often sow animosity that might bear fruit in the needless embitterment of a greater. Neither Britain nor the United States can afford to nurture such animosities; the Treaty has not only removed the chance of these, but has infused a cordiality into the general feeling between the two countries than which there is perhaps no more desirable object of British statesmanship in the whole world. As for Venezuela, we have compromised the matter, but diplomatically it cannot be said that we have been otherwise than worsted. In carrying on all the negotiations through the United States, and in admitting the principle of arbitration at their behest, we have gone a long step towards admitting also the new Monroe Doctrine. That doctrine means the protectorate of the United States over the whole Western hemisphere, including the British possessions therein. The ambition of the States—not an unnatural one—extends to theulti-

mate possession of every inch of American ground, and the recognition of Mr. Olney's adaptation of Monroe's principle would furnish the Republic with a most powerful lever to convert that ambition into fact. But all that is for a future remoter than the twelve months of 1897. In the meantime we can do no better than cultivate the best relations with the one power on earth which it would be folly to beslaver and madness to provoke. If once prejudice could be erased by a better mutual knowledge, the course of harmonious relations, even of co-operation, would flow smoothly enough. There is enough self-control and common sense on both sides of the Atlantic for that. Let us only seize every occasion of friendliness; then we need apprehend neither war nor constrained surrender when there comes occasion of difference.

On the whole, Lord Salisbury may be congratulated on the success of his policy during the year. He entered upon it beset with difficulties, and with hardly a first-class Power in the world which was not a possible enemy for the near future. He has closed it with all immediate causes of apprehension blown over. Nevertheless, it is well that we should frankly recognise that this has been done rather by compromise, not to say surrender, than by the vigorous pressing of his own policy against opposition. The want of confidence, born of a suspicion that this country cannot afford to back its opinions

up to the point of war, still taints our policy, as it has done for many years. Britain will not exercise her due weight in the councils of the world until confidence succeeds to insecurity. Confidence will not come until we have armaments to base it on. Readiness for war is the best guarantee, not only of peace, but of the peaceful enforcement of our national will. We believe, most of us, that our national will can be exercised for the advantage of ourselves and of the world, and for the increase of righteousness. It behoves us, therefore, to harden righteousness with such an alloy of force as shall make it pass current on the exchange of nations.

G. W. STEEVENS.



### III. THE SERVICES

#### i. THE NAVY

THE political incidents of December, 1895, and January, 1896, when the British Empire was perilously near the brink of a war, first with the United States and then with Germany, and the openly confessed "isolation" of this country made it certain that the naval programme for 1896-7 would be an extensive one. There was, too, a general feeling of anxiety throughout the country, which favoured vigorous measures. Numerous letters had appeared in the Press from all sorts and conditions of men, all advocating a great increase in our naval armaments; and the Press itself, which here was reflecting public opinion, spoke with no uncertain voice. If Mr. Goschen fell below some expectations, his programme was yet a great one. On March 2 he made his statement. The views he took were very optimistic, as becomes an official. As to the *personnel* of the fleet, he held that the measures taken to fill the lieutenants' list, by drawing one hundred supplementary lieutenants from the merchant service, had proved eminently satisfactory. He painted the prospects of the naval engineer in the rosiest colours, though it is notorious that the Admiralty

experiences considerable difficulties in getting officers in this important branch. He stated that a college on land would be substituted for the *Britannia*, and that the age of entrance for cadets would be raised, to draw boys from the public schools. Turning to material—more ships were at sea than in 1895, and these were better ships. The new types had proved a complete success, the *Majestic* and the torpedo-boat destroyers being especially commended. The programme for 1896–7 was then disclosed. It included five large battleships of modified *Majestic* type; four first, three second, and six third-class cruisers, with twenty-eight destroyers. To these should be added ships under construction in March, 1896: eight battleships, twenty-one cruisers, and forty destroyers. At the same time, the construction of the ships in hand was being much accelerated, and a supplementary estimate of £1,000,000 was required to pay for the extra work which had been done. The total estimates were £21,823,000, an increase of £3,122,000 on those of 1895–6. Of this sum, £6,231,000 (including the supplementary vote) went for new construction in 1895, and £7,765,646 in 1896. 4,900 men were added to the *personnel*. Besides this large programme, the Government had decided to extend greatly the Naval Works Bill, increasing the amount to be voted for this purpose from £8,500,000 to £14,000,000, and constructing three docks, instead of one, at Gibraltar, and a new

harbour at Dover. Mr. Goschen's speech was an able one; incidentally he praised the mobilisation of the Flying Squadron as having been effected "without fuss or difficulty"; and other sayings of his were, "size alone is no criterion of the fighting value of a ship," "defensive naval strategy does not necessitate coal supply, offensive naval strategy makes coal supply essential," and, "the British people are unanimous that our fleets should represent the self-reliance of a great nation."

Sir C. Dilke criticised the programme with much force and knowledge. The Admiralty had shown a want of initiative in providing docks at Gibraltar. Three were now to be made, but only through the exertions of a private committee. There was a want of system in the administration. The Reserve was still drilled with muzzle-loaders: muzzle-loaders were on board many of our battleships. The strength of our Navy depended mainly on our battleships, and we seemed here to have no definite standard. The programme was a hand-to-mouth one; it settled nothing, and did not establish our supremacy. For England a navy was an expensive necessity: for France or Russia an expensive luxury. He took Mr. Goschen to task for his statement that "we shall not fight alone." So far from the mobilisation of the Flying Squadron being creditable, it shed a disastrous light on British organisation. The defence of our Coaling Stations

was not satisfactory. Of the Naval Reserve only 8,000 could be counted upon, and could these be withdrawn from the merchant service, when in our foreign-going sailing ships 44 per cent. of the men were foreigners, and in our steamers 30·4 per cent? The main point of the speech was the inadequate numerical force of British battleships, as against the battleships of the Dual Alliance. It was impressive from its clear and convincing logic, its tone of impartiality and patriotism, and from the deep attention which Sir Charles Dilke is known to pay to foreign policy and foreign armaments.

In reply, Mr. Balfour made one of his unhappiest efforts; clearly showing that he, at least, has not given deep study to the great question of our time. He asserted, *inter alia*, that the First Sea Lord is not responsible: the responsibility attaches to the First Lord and the Ministry, *i.e.* to no one in particular and to every one in general. Because Sir C. Dilke looked ahead, his speech had "a very speculative element." It was "easy to suppose a combination able to crush you"; as if in January, 1896, something very like such a combination had not been "supposed," but actually in existence. Then, because foreign second-class battleships were of little use far from their base, he declined to count them, apparently imagining that England is as far from Europe as Australia from Asia. Naturally, after this comfortable deduction, he could

show that England was ahead in first-class battleships. Finally, he was in great fear of reaction—as if statesmen have not always to struggle with the waywardness of democracy in this country.

Of other speakers, Sir W. V. Harcourt dwelt on the fact that the situation had changed. England was in the "isolation arising from the unfriendliness of the world." He held that "the nation will always demand that you shall have a number, and a considerable number, of vessels in the Channel, which are not to go to the other end of the world in case of war." He did not believe that the nation "would ever again run the risk, which was nearly fatal to it just before the Battle of Trafalgar." Sir A. Forwood stated that in 1895 England was short of her standard by thirteen battleships. Sir J. Colomb hoped that "they had got away from the fallacious idea that if our fleet was equal to the two greatest foreign fleets, we were all secure." In the debate on the Naval Works Bill, there was a good deal of criticism of the harbour of refuge at Dover, Dungeness being suggested in the Press as an alternative site.

If we ask how far the Estimates of 1896 were really adequate, the answer must be, that as an instalment only could the programme of 1896 be accepted as satisfactory. It was obviously impossible in one year to atone for the negligence and parsimony of the past, but steps should have been

taken either to train the Naval Reserve adequately, or to constitute a new and more reliable Reserve by short service. Mr. Goschen made a great mistake in promising a reduction of the ship-building vote in 1897; as England has no prospect of obtaining the superiority requisite to command the sea, unless she adds considerably to her programme in the following years. To obtain the large sums needed, various expedients have been suggested: a suspension of the Sinking Fund, which is a measure only to be commended as a last and most desperate resource; a tax on all sea-borne goods imported into the British empire; and an impost of 5 or 10 per cent. on foreign manufactured goods imported into Great Britain. The last would give from £3,000,000 to £6,000,000; and would, perhaps, be the most satisfactory measure.

Outside Parliament great activity has been displayed by the Navy League (13, Victoria Street, S.W.), an institution the aim of which is to assure to Great Britain the command of the sea. It hopes to educate public opinion and to support the Admiralty in any forward steps which that body may choose to take. Amongst its leading members are many naval officers of high distinction, as Admirals Sir R. Vesey Hamilton, Fanshawe and Colomb, and Captain Eardley Wilmot. On April 23, a well-attended meeting was held in the City, when Lord Charles Beresford urged the need of increased pro-

tection for our ocean lines of communication. The volume of our trade has grown enormously, and we carry the goods not only of British subjects, but of most of the nations of the world. The British Empire rests and depends upon the command of the sea. He suggested that Returns should be obtained showing (1) strength of the various navies, muzzle-loading guns to be indicated ; (2) training of Naval Reserve, to indicate what men had undergone a period of service in the fleet ; (3) *personnel* of the Merchant Service. The speaker advised the Navy League to educate the people rather than to interfere with technical matters. He, as an expert, had a right to pronounce upon such questions. He drew great attention to the public neglect of the navy, instancing the inadequate number of decorations allotted to it. It was out of sight and out of mind. A second matter to which the League has called attention is the question of manning both the Navy and the Merchant Service. It collected the opinions of various experts, which were as follows : Lord C. Beresford maintained that though five years are required to train a seaman, the proper complement of men is not added when new ships are laid down. We are now 11,000 men short ; we shall be 22,000 short when the ships building are completed. He laid especial stress upon the necessity of a thoroughly trained reserve, our present reserve being untrained. Admiral Sir G. Elliot considered that the Naval

Volunteers should be resuscitated and recruited from the ranks of our fishermen, yachtsmen, and shipwrights. Commander Honner emphasized the need of training in the Reserve : of 36 batteries where the R.N.R. is drilled 17 have no breechloading guns. He urged short service for one-third of the *personnel*, five years being passed in the Navy, and twenty in the Reserve. He calculated our deficiency at 830 lieutenants, 237 engineers, 3,000 engine-room men and stokers, and 14,000 seamen. Admiral Colomb was strongly against short service, and for an improved training of the R.N.R. Captain Nicholetts held that the key to the situation was in the merchant service, and here Lieut. Crutchley (R.N.R.) quite agreed with him. Lads should be trained for our merchant shipping and R.N.R. Mr. T. A. Brassey considered it impossible to maintain the *personnel* of the navy on a war footing in peace, and held that we must possess a reserve. In the *Nineteenth Century* (December) he has proposed for boys entering the merchant service : (1) a four years' apprenticeship, the shipowner and boy each receiving £10 from the State ; (2) one year's service in the Navy, (3) returning to service in the mercantile marine, with one month's naval training each year. Captain Eardley Wilmot held that the R.N.R. does not suit modern conditions, that a trained reserve is absolutely necessary, and that short service should be introduced. Largely through

the efforts of the Navy League and its supporters, the question was taken up by the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce. Lord Charles Beresford was invited to address it, and said that to man our effective fighting ships 99,232 men were wanted. We had in 1896 16,362 men short of the necessary force, whilst 11,200 men were needed for ships building. We were 5,000 men short in engine-room ratings, and had only 2,500 in reserve. Compared with other countries the British Reserve was most inadequate, and the British seamen could not be withdrawn from the merchant service, so that really half the R.N.R. was useless. A resolution was carried urging that the Government should hold an inquiry and bring forward definite proposals in 1897. To this Mr. Goschen replied by suggesting that Lord Charles Beresford was an irresponsible person, though he might have remembered that Lord Charles holds high rank in the navy, has been a Lord of the Admiralty, and is in every sense of the word an expert. Lord Hood of Avalon, an ex-First Sea Lord, in a letter to the *Times* (Nov. 3) stated "without hesitation, we are not prepared . . . with the necessary number of well-trained men to provide crews for the whole of the vessels which would be available for service in the event of war." The fact is undoubted that England has not the supply of well-trained men which she will want in war; that other nations have large and

well-trained reserves; and that if this country ventured to resort to the press-gang, as in the old days, the press would give an absolutely useless class of men, because these would be untrained. The Associated Chambers of Commerce issued in October a memorial to the Government, in which great stress is laid upon the large number of foreigners in the merchant service, the rapid growth of foreign navies, the danger which threatens our commerce in war, and the need of a well-trained reserve.

Another question to which the Navy League, or its prominent members, has directed attention is our strength in battleships. The Return which Lord C. Beresford suggested was necessary, has been obtained by Sir C. Dilke, whose earnest and statesmanlike advocacy of a strong fleet is not a plant of new growth. In its briefest form the Return gives the following official figures.

	Britain.	France.	Russia.	Germany.	Italy.	U.S.A.
Battleships . . . . .	57	95	18	24	15	11
Cruisers . . . . .	150	57	19	86	23	25
Coast-Defence Ships. .	15	14	16	11	0	7
Special Vessels . . . .	8	1	5	1	2	0
Torpedo Gunboats and						
Destroyers . . . . .	125	16	22	5	18	2
Torpedo Boats . . . . .	101	220	172	114	141	22
	451	343	252	191	199	67

The standard which the Navy League demands for great Britain is, that strength laid down by the three admirals' report of 1888 on the Manceuvres as necessary to blockade the enemy, viz., 5 British to 3 hostile battleships, or the standard officially issued in 1889, which required for the British fleet a superiority of one-third in battleships over the combined forces of France and Russia. Since France and Russia will have, in 1899, 51 battleships to 57 British battleships, it is plain that this country is far below any such standard. The arguments upon which the Navy League relies are these: History shows that to command the sea we must have, not a slight, but an overwhelming superiority. In the war with France of 1804-15, the British fleet started with 175 battleships and 244 frigates, whilst its enemies never possessed more than 80 or 85 battleships and 50 or 60 frigates. Yet, notwithstanding this immense preponderance on paper, at the critical points we were not able to concentrate superior numerical forces. In the 1804-5 campaign, we had moments of very great peril; and there was then a great difference in quality between the British fleet on the one hand, and the Franco-Spanish fleet on the other. The allies had not good officers, and the Revolution may be said to have fatally impaired the discipline and organisation of the French Navy. There is this further point to be remembered: that we could scarcely retain our carrying trade against

neutral competitors if we suffered the losses from the enemy's commerce-destroyers which we suffered in 1805. So at least thinks Mr. Danson, a writer of great authority on maritime insurance. We have now a vastly greater commerce, and we have far fewer cruisers to defend it than in 1805. Depending as we do entirely upon the sea, injury to our commerce means an instant rise in the price of food and raw materials, which will hamper our manufacturers. Free trade has taken away our self-dependence, and increased our need of a strong fleet. If many of our 57 battleships are very large and modern ships, there is also this fact to be weighed, that 16 of them are armed with ancient muzzle-loading guns, which, even in their own day, were inferior weapons. On the other hand, France and Russia have between them 8 ships with old guns, though not muzzle-loaders. Our defensive arrangements are planned upon the assumption that we are going to command the sea, and yet, truth to tell, our command is in doubt. The Navy League's arguments and actions have been attacked by the Increased Armaments Protest Committee, a body which came into existence early in 1896, and which, far from considering our armaments inadequate, holds that they are ruinously excessive. Its views were set forth in a series of letters to the Press; and being opposed by writers in the *Times*, a valuable correspondence on com-

parative sea power followed [November]; Admiral Colomb, questioning the value of the battleship as against the destroyer, and Admiral Fitzgerald writing that "the Empire has been won by the sword, and cannot be defended with the pap spoon." The Navy League, on 28th November, issued letters to 200 Mayors and to its Branches, urging these to call meetings to protest against any reduction of the Estimates—such as is purposed, if rumour be correct, during 1897—and to demand a greater strength of battleships. It should be remembered that many of the foreign navies possess very powerful armoured "coast-defence ships," which would be capable of doing the battleship's work in fine weather near their own ports. To our Navy, which must be prepared to keep the sea in all weather and under all circumstances, such vessels are useless. Foreign Navies also possess armoured cruisers, which are capable of fighting in line. England has no such ships of modern construction.

A matter which has received great attention in the Press is the mobilisation of the fleet. It took twelve days to get the Flying Squadron of six large and six small vessels to sea, when there was the prospect of trouble with Germany. The *Army and Navy Gazette*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, *Saturday Review*, and various writers in the *Fortnightly Review* and other magazines, have called attention to this most important question. In Germany the whole

fleet can be mobilised in forty-eight hours ; and this is nominally the case in England. Unfortunately, our organisation is not up to date, and great delays occur when ships in the A Reserve are suddenly wanted. The problem is an extremely difficult one, but there is no reason to suppose that it is insoluble. The apathy of the public, which was quite satisfied with the dilatory performance in the case of the Flying Squadron, is perhaps as much to blame as the Admiralty.

The Navy League, anxious to appeal to national spirit and to interest the people in the Navy, organised a national commemoration of Trafalgar. This was an unqualified success. On October 21st, the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square was decorated, with the aid of a steeple-jack, by the League, whilst numerous wreaths were sent by ships and private admirers. Flags were hoisted in many towns, both in England and the Colonies. The British press received the action of the Navy League with warm approval.

A very important speech on the subject of Imperial Defence was made by the Duke of Devonshire in December, to the British Empire League. In this he stated that the Imperial Navy would generally protect the sea ways, but could not prevent the raids of isolated hostile cruisers. He asked the Colonies to undertake the defence of the distant bases rather than to organise small colonial fleets.

As he is the President of the Cabinet Committee of national and imperial defence, his speech may be regarded as an official declaration. At the present time Australia contributes towards a squadron of 5 cruisers and 2 torpedo gunboats, which must be retained on the Australian station. Thus they are tied down and cannot be used to defend Australia in a fleet action in, for instance, the China Sea. The arrangement with the colonies in Australia is not likely to be renewed in its present form.

At the close of the year further uneasiness was excited in England by the decision of Russia, Germany and France, to strengthen their respective navies. Russia is proposing to spend a sum of £90,000,000 during the next ten years on her navy : in France, MM. Lockroy, de Kerjégu, and Deloncle are clamouring for a larger fleet, and, in particular, for vessels which shall be able to prey upon commerce, for coaling stations, for improved mobilisation and organisation. M. Lockroy has indeed abandoned his project of spending an extra £8,000,000 on the Navy, but he was assured by the Minister of Marine that the Government was considering an increased programme of construction. In Germany estimates of £6,467,000 were proposed for 1897, but it is not certain that they will be sanctioned by the Reichstag. Italy, the United States, Russia, Holland, and Japan are also largely increasing their naval armaments. In the face of these facts it

appears as though England would have to increase rather than reduce her Navy Estimates in 1897, if she wishes to command the sea in war.

H. W. WILSON.

## ii. THE ARMY

TWENTY-FIVE years have elapsed since reforms of the most wide-reaching character were introduced in the organisation of Her Majesty's Land Forces, and as in the next session of Parliament these reforms are likely to be most virulently attacked, and subjected to the searching criticism of able but very extensively misinformed men, no better opportunity could be taken to review the progress made in the period, and to point out both the advantages gained and the hindrances which still remain to be conquered, before the full efficiency the consequent execution of these reforms promises can be fully attained.

First, it is necessary to sketch briefly the Army of 1870, and I must beg my readers to believe that, in doing so, it is the system I attack and not individuals, who were but what that system made them. If the Army was inefficient—and considered as a whole it undoubtedly was so,—the blame falls on the administrators who failed to realize the changed conditions which steam and electricity had

brought about, not on the men who loyally did their best to carry out their duties.

Essentially, the point was this. Ever since the days of Cromwell until Waterloo, the Army had been almost on a permanent war footing. There had been interludes of peace, no doubt, but in the main the old traditions of constant war service had been perpetuated, and in everything that relates to the tactical efficiency of the smaller units the rank and file trained themselves.

They were taught their drill in masses, under specially selected officers, but all the little things—outposts, skill in skirmishing, the minor ruses of war, in fact—were learnt by the recruit from the older soldiers in the guard-room and round the bivouac fires.

It was the officer's business simply to lead, and if his heart was in the right place, the men did the rest for themselves. Nowadays he has both to teach and to lead, and the qualities required to fulfil both *rôles* are of a very different order indeed.

During a long spell of peace the warlike knowledge was apt to die out, and if, under these conditions, the army encountered an enemy in which the tradition of fighting was still young, defeat and disaster were its certain fate, as witness the Prussians at Jena.

Given the war-seasoned soldiers of the 18th century and the task of leading, even in its highest

branches, was relatively a simple one. A man wanted only a clear head and great character, for the army worked itself, so to speak: every man knew his own duty from experience and it was only necessary to order, within the limits of the men's capacity, what was to be done, in order to ensure its execution, unless the enemy proved the better fighter.

Neither Frederick the Great or Napoleon could have passed the examinations for a Captain's rank in the German, French or British army of to-day. The former, to judge from some topographical sketches recently republished in facsimile by the Prussian General Staff, would have been infallibly spun by any modern board of examiners, and the handwriting of the latter would have sufficed to wreck his career at the very outset. Yet both were great leaders of men, and it can surely be no disparagement to our own Generals of a quarter of a century ago, if we assign their weaknesses and shortcomings to the action of the same cause, viz., the want of a system which compelled them to master the elements of their own profession.

This system did not exist, simply because in England nobody had ever dreamt that the necessity for it could arise. Thanks to our constant little wars, the thread of active service tradition still persisted amongst certain regiments and specially amongst the leaders who, all of them, had won

their promotion before the enemy. What they failed to observe was that this tradition was already extinct in some regiments, and rapidly tending to disappear in others—hence that the need had arisen for an entirely new kind of activity on their part, and one which they had never been trained to supply.

Given adequate time for preparation, and the organising instinct will never fail the Englishman. When the need arises, each man faces his responsibility, adapts himself to his surroundings, and in a very short time discovers the line of least resistance for his own work. This has been proved in countless minor expeditions where we and the enemy have, so to speak, both started fair. But it had never dawned on any one amongst us that we might be called on suddenly to confront an army fifty years ahead of us in organisation, who would not allow us more than a few days to shake down into our places.

In the old days, intervals of peace had been looked on as opportunities for well-earned relaxation from the hardships of war, and the army who, collectively, enjoy a spell of idleness when they can get it, like other people, can hardly be blamed if they failed to note the passage of time, and the fact that the periods of peace soon began to exceed very materially the duration of war. Even though war might come at any moment, it still took weeks to

arrive at the seat of war and a little extra pressure would soon overtake the arrears of accumulated work. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at if, when the awakening came and we suddenly found ourselves contrasted with an army steadily trained for immediate readiness for war for at least fifty years, we discovered that we had drifted very far indeed to leeward.

Popular opinion awoke to the fact that steam and electricity had evolved entirely new conditions of warfare which our own military organisation, inherited from the Seven Years' War Period, was quite inadequate to cope with. It was realized that time enough would never again be afforded to any nation to develop its latent military capacity, but that reserves must at all times be ready to take their places in the ranks of the peace establishment, and ultimately to make good immediately all vacancies due to the inevitable wastage of war service, with thoroughly trained men, for the efforts which France had put forward after Sedan had shown conclusively the impossibility of improvising troops in face of the enemy.

These necessities could only, for obvious reasons, be met by recourse to Short Service—the exact duration being determined by the peculiar conditions entailed on us by our Indian and Colonial empire. The full consequences which were to flow from this alteration in our system do not seem to

have been apparent to the reformers ; indeed, even at the present moment it is evident, from the speeches and writings of the great bulk of those who are interested in military matters, that the connection between efficiency and short service—as long as the proper proportion between our home and foreign establishments is preserved—is very far from being universally realized ; but it is precisely this inevitable connection which lies at the root of the matter, and unless it is properly appreciated the arguments of the opponents of increased military expenditure will be very difficult to meet.

It has been pointed out above that in the old long service armies, the rank and file made themselves. If a state of war was chronic, the old soldiers taught the young ones the detail of their trade, and they had the best of all possible motives to do so thoroughly, for, at any moment under fire, their lives might depend on the knowledge they had imparted to their comrades. In peace time they taught the recruit other things—mainly, how to carry on all duties with the minimum possible amount of trouble and friction, and hence we find that in every long service army exposed to the influence of a long-continued period of peace, a species of dry rot set in, and the army which had the most recent experience of war service behind it was invariably victorious.

Under long service conditions very few recruits

joined in the year—10 per cent. amply sufficed to meet the average wastage—and hence it was simple and practical to hand their training over to a couple of specialists—the adjutant and sergeant-major; and since very little drill was required to maintain amongst the old soldiers the appearance of steadiness on parade, the remaining officers went on leave, and hence arose the tradition of idleness in the British Home Army which it is so difficult to eliminate.

Matters became worse in a regiment exposed to these conditions when a commanding officer of unusual energy was appointed. The establishment of officers being calculated to meet the needs of war, which are many times greater than those of peace, there was very little indeed to occupy a hard-working man's energy in his own sphere of action, and hence to fill up his time he was compelled to encroach on the province of his subordinates; and since the outward show of uniformity is so much more easily obtained under one man than under many, the results seemed to justify completely this interference, whilst the real point of the matter, viz., the deprivation of all opportunity of exercising the junior officers in the habit of command—without which the power to resolve and execute rapidly becomes atrophied—remained unsuspected and unnoticed.

When therefore the sudden change in the condi-

tions of enlistment threw upon the home battalions the necessity of training some 30 per cent. of recruits annually, whilst at the same time the old soldiers—the men who had previously performed this duty—were disappearing, a violent upheaval of all conditions ensued, and an entirely new system had to be evolved out of the army itself to meet the new requirements.

Every rank throughout the infantry and cavalry had simultaneously to evolve a new form of energy, of an exactly opposite nature to what their previous experience had taught them. Colonels had to learn not to interfere with their subordinates, and subordinates had to acquire the power of exercising responsibility and initiative within the prescribed limits of their commands—functions for which their previous training, based on blind obedience, had completely unfitted the great majority.

To make matters worse, the whole world of military thought was in wild confusion, owing to the uncertainty which prevailed in all armies as to the tactical consequences involved by the introduction of the breech-loader and the new artillery.

If even the Germans, with their direct experience, and their highly trained staff to utilise it, took nearly ten years to arrive at principles of universal application, it is hardly to be wondered at if we, with only hearsay evidence to go upon, and with far more complicated conditions of service to which

to adapt ourselves, floundered still longer in the swamps of conjecture, and with the best will in the world could find no sound foundation for our new system of education.

When the full history of the evolution of our modern army comes to be written, I feel convinced that full justice will be accorded to the Duke of Cambridge for the admirable way in which, by deprecating all hasty innovation, he maintained us in the true direction of advance.

It is too often forgotten that at the time, he formed the one link between the direct experience the Germans had to go upon, and the hearsay evidence to which, as already pointed out, the rest of the army was condemned. Where we had to rely on the somewhat hysterical pamphleteers of foreign armies, he could go direct to the responsible men of the successful one, and no one who can recall his critiques at Aldershot can fail to see by the light of subsequent events, how very materially he profited by these opportunities. For it is now abundantly demonstrated that in point of tactical principles, in 1870, it was we, and not the Germans—who indeed were inferior to the French in this respect—who still held the lead ; and the proof of it is to be seen on any great manœuvre field on the Continent at the present moment, where, in spite of all variations of detail, the underlying principles of the old line tactics may be observed in far greater vitality than in

any battle of the Franco-German or Austro-German War—distances only having been modified to suit the requirements of the new weapons.

Under the circumstances the course adopted by the authorities in instituting examinations for promotion was a most fortunate one. Whether the books selected by them were the best for the purpose intended may be questioned, but the point is immaterial, the essential matter being that books cannot be read without inducing thought and awakening interest, and the common sense of the majority, guided by active service experience, which, however different the local conditions, always brings men down to the bed-rock of human nature, soon re-established a basis of common knowledge on which to erect our future structure.

We had not long to wait for results. The fighting in Burmah gave our new race of subalterns an opportunity of showing their mettle; and no young officers of any nation ever disclosed better quality; for, in spite of the most adverse conditions of climate, they showed a capacity for making the most of their opportunities, and for accepting responsibility, that any army might envy. The transformation of the Indian Army was also essentially their work, for, but for the increased interest they evinced in the performance of their duties, due to a wider comprehension of what these duties actually are, not all the energy of their chiefs could have

prevailed at all. It is no disparagement of these officers to say this, and certainly will not be felt as such by them, for they thoroughly realized and admitted at the time the value of the trained intelligence the new class of young officers brought to their duties.

At home progress was naturally not so rapid, for here the far more difficult and thankless task of training the young recruit for others to handle had to be undertaken. Yet even here, when the numbers to be dealt with bore a proper proportion to the teaching staff, the results were most satisfactory, and it soon became evident that even with our far from satisfactory class of raw material, we could obtain, within the same limit of time, the same standard of efficiency as the best troops of any other army. But, unfortunately, it was not often that these proper proportions could be observed, for the expansion of the Empire had brought in its train a new condition, the possibility of which had altogether been overlooked by the original framers of our system.

The keystone of the whole edifice had been the equality between the numbers of battalions at home and abroad, but from the very outset it had been found impossible to preserve this equilibrium, as every year additional battalions were required for foreign service, and the consequences, especially during the continuance of active service operations in

which we have so often been engaged, were far more serious than the extent of the cause would seem to justify in the mind of the superficial investigator.

The vast increase of work thus suddenly thrown upon us, fairly broke the spirit of everybody. Everywhere it was the same cry: "We quite understand our position as nurseries to our linked battalions, and are willing to take up the load borne by our comrades in foreign armies, but neither they nor we can manage the strain now put upon us. The German officer has from two to three years to break in his recruits, and the work is done in the collective interest of the regiment, but we have only from six to eight months to handle almost the double number of young soldiers, and in that time it is not possible to evolve between men and officers that *esprit de corps* on which all subsequent efficiency depends"; and this complaint was absolutely unanswerable, and remains so to the present day.

Had the trouble come later, it might not have been so severely felt, but coming as it did, just when the whole mechanism of the service was still undergoing a most fundamental revolution, it proved little less than disastrous; for, in view of the impossibility of meeting these new requirements, the company officers lost all interest in their work, and the control of the whole machinery relapsed into the hands of the colonel and the sergeant-major.

This is the defect Parliament will be called on to

remedy next session, and no outlay of public money promises a larger or better return, for not only does it touch the fighting efficiency of the Army, but the whole problem of employment for reserve soldiers, and the enlistment of a suitable class of recruit is bound up in it likewise. For until it is obtained, the individual training of the soldier—which, as German experience sufficiently demonstrates, makes a man both a better citizen and a more reliable workman, a man, in fact, who can command his price in the labour market—is impossible; and we are compelled to adhere to the old-fashioned “massendressur” mass training, which destroys his individuality and weakens his moral character, the want of which so often renders it impossible for even well-intentioned employers to engage him.<sup>1</sup>

Failing to obtain employment, he becomes a tramp, bitterly cursing the folly which led him to enlist, and acts as a standing warning to others not to follow his example. Hence we are again driven to accept the scum of the labour market, whom we still further demoralize, and ultimately the Army becomes a running sore on the community, instead of the best national university for the lower classes, and the best counterpoise to “degeneracy” which the mind of man has hitherto conceived.

<sup>1</sup> See the report of the committee on the Employment of Reserve Soldiers, especially the evidence of the Railway Managers.

That the new generation of young officers are now fit to assume this responsibility for the instruction of their men—provided the work put on them is not in excess of their powers—is proved by the history of those regiments and branches of the service which have been least affected by the conditions above detailed. Those regiments which, thanks to a relatively unbroken record of active service, have preserved most thoroughly the essence of decentralisation, neither find difficulty in procuring suitable recruits, nor in providing work for their reserve men; and the Engineers and Artillery, who have always been decentralised, *i.e.* organised by batteries and companies, have encountered no difficulty at all. The cavalry suffer under special troubles of their own; but here, too, the provision of an ampler supply of horses, which would keep alive the continuity of the training of all ranks is the chief thing to be desired, and is entirely a matter of money.

We may go yet further than this, and assert, without fear of contradiction, that without this additional expenditure now called for, there is no possibility of the Army ever becoming efficient at all: for no general could guarantee results from forces so very heterogeneous in quality.

The construction of a reliable plan of campaign is identical in principle with the designing of a great railway bridge, or any other engineering project,—

each must be based on an accurate knowledge of the strength of the materials available ; and just as no engineer would stake his reputation on the stability of a structure the materials for which were full of hidden flaws, so no general could undertake the far more serious responsibility for the success of a scheme depending on the interaction of a number of units, no two of which are in the same condition of efficiency, for no foresight on his part could suffice to ensure that the greatest strain should not fall on the weakest link of his chain. To base everything on the strength of the weakest unit would rob the Army as a whole of perhaps five-sixths of its strength, and condemn the leader to certain failure beforehand. Is it reasonable to expect any soldier to accept such a risk with the example of Lord Raglan's treatment before him ?

The Army and its leaders deserve greater consideration at the hands of their countrymen. Under circumstances of the greatest difficulty and severe discouragement, they have shown themselves full of vitality and resources, and within a single military generation have accomplished all that even the Germans could achieve in double the time ; but they cannot make bricks without straw, and if their present reasonable demands are not satisfied, the nation will go on wasting its millions on a force on which no reliance can ever be placed, and which will fail before an European army precisely as its forerunner failed in the Crimea.

The whole question lies in a nutshell. The nation is, as regards its fighting forces, in the position of a Railway Company, which shortly after the opening of its line for traffic, finds itself overwhelmed by an excess of business, with powerful rivals in the field. An increment of 5 per cent. in its capital will treble its receipts and defy competition. Is there any board of directors in the kingdom which, if able to borrow at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., would hesitate to increase its liabilities.

F. N. MAUDE,

*Captain late R.E.*

## IV. THE UNITED STATES

THE year 1896 has been for the American people a year of achievement and progress. Never at any time in their history has their capacity for self-government been so fairly tested and so thoroughly demonstrated. If the political experiences of the year have disclosed many faults and weaknesses in American methods, institutions, and legalized arrangements, it has also been made clear to those who have the gift of discernment that the American democracy can, and will, face its problems one at a time with honesty, candour, intelligence, and remarkable self-control. The events of the year 1896 have an especial noteworthiness, moreover, because in them has been determined the lines upon which the American Republic will round out the years that remain of the nineteenth century.

The written constitution of the United States is a document that undergoes no changes. It has not been altered since the adoption of the amendments following the civil war thirty years ago, which abolished slavery and bestowed the full privileges of citizenship upon the coloured race. The actual

political constitution of the country, however, does undergo material changes from time to time. One important change effected in the year 1896 was the admission of the territory of Utah to a place in the sisterhood of sovereign states as the forty-fifth in number. A very great majority of the states constituting the Federal Union have, in point of fact, been created by the Union itself, and have been carved out of the gradually developing wildernesses of the national domain. Nevertheless, under the theory of American government,—now become a legal fiction,—the Federal Union is itself the creature of a group of equal, sovereign states. The general government, in legal theory, is paramount only as respects its delegated powers, residual sovereignty remaining vested in the states respectively. Thus Utah, now admitted to the Union, has all the prerogatives of New York or any other of the thirteen original states.

The Federal Constitution, formed in 1787, provided for a Senate to be composed of two members from each state, while the Lower House was to consist of representatives apportioned to the states in the ratio of their population, with a periodical reapportionment after each decennial census-taking. It was believed in the early days of the Republic that the senators, elected for six years, would always be the conservative factor in the Government.

But the rapid admission of new western states

has brought about a somewhat startling change in the actual constitution of the American Government, by virtue of the provision which secures to each new state, regardless of its population or wealth, the same representation in the Senate that is accorded to the most important and highly developed of the older commonwealths. How this provision might sometime block the practical working of Government had never been widely comprehended. But the events of 1896 forced the truth upon a nation which had been more accustomed to inspect the venerable written document than the actual, working constitution. A comparatively small minority of the American people, scattered through such sparsely settled states as North and South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Washington, and Nevada, have shown themselves able, by their representation in the Senate, to counterbalance the influence of the many millions of people living in such great states as New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The situation has vitally affected all recent attempts at important legislation.

The Free Silver movement, as a great question in practical politics, is the result of this abnormal development of the sectional, non-representative character of the Senate. The silver-mining interests of the country are principally localised in the new states of sparse population ; and the senators from those states have been the leaders in the Free Silver

propaganda. It was through their efforts that the free coinage of silver came to be agitated in the adjoining agricultural states, as the cure for ills that have now for some years past been chronic throughout the farming districts of all countries alike. The control of the Senate by the Free Silver men was responsible, almost entirely, for the difficulties through which the United States treasury has struggled for more than a year past. The House of Representatives, although Republican by a large majority, was entirely ready to grant to Mr. Cleveland and his Secretary of the Treasury an authority to make temporary loans which would have gone far to relieve apprehension, and to lessen the tendency to drain from the Treasury the reserve stock of gold. Furthermore, when it was shown that the Wilson Reform Tariff and Revenue Enactment was not productive of sufficient income, the House of Representatives readily passed the so-called Dingley Bill, designed to increase the Government's receipts without seriously affecting any principles at issue between parties. The Senate, however, refused to pass this patriotic measure for the relief of the Treasury, without attaching to it an amendment providing for the free coinage of silver. Thus, every plan for the improvement of the revenues and the relief of the Treasury, whether proposed by Mr. Cleveland's administration, or brought forward by the Republican House of Representatives, was

defeated through the obstructionist character of a Senate in which the balance of power was firmly wielded by a group of men representing the new states of the far West.

Furthermore, in matters affecting the foreign relations of the United States the conservative traditions of the Senate have been almost entirely abandoned, and the country has been obliged to look to the House of Representatives for a display of calmness and the spirit of deliberation. It will be seen, then, that the peculiar structure of the United States Senate has, in view of the rapid admission to the Union of undeveloped Western states, brought about a formidable change in the real working constitution of the Government.

In the tutelary political status of "territories," there yet remain Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, not counting the so-called "Indian Territory." These three territories had confidently expected that 1896 would find them also included in the list of sovereign states. But although their admission was recommended by Congressional committees, it has not yet been accomplished. Arizona and New Mexico will probably attain the desired goal within a year or two at farthest, and Oklahoma will not have long to wait. Thus an exceedingly ill-balanced Senate will have become yet more perilously sectional, and unresponsive to the public opinion of the nation. No one in the United States seriously

supposes that it would be possible without a revolution to change the equal representation of the states in the Senate. There is no remedy to be expected except that which must come gradually with the progress of the new states in population, in social stability, and in economic maturity. Unfortunately, the process of rapid development in the region lying between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains seems for the present to be seriously checked. The Presidential vote in November indicated a great gain in the population of the country as a whole ; and there is some reason to believe that the census of 1900, for which preparations are now making, will show a population of fully 75,000,000 ; but the growth of late has been relatively greater in the old states and the industrial centres than in the new agricultural and mining states.

It is to be noted that with the admission of Utah to the Union there has practically disappeared from the sphere of national discussion the long-vexed Mormon question. Although the Mormons are in control of the new state, they came into the Union under a pledge that polygamy should be for ever abandoned ; and it is generally believed that the social peculiarities of Mormonism are a closed episode.

The year 1896 witnessed the repeal of the last lingering remnants of the legislation that discriminated against participants in the Southern rebellion.

Not only has the United States Government abandoned the supervision of federal elections in the South, but it has now removed the disabilities as to military rank and service of those surviving southern officers who had, previous to the war, belonged to the army or navy of the United States. The repeal of these disabilities is a matter of sentiment rather than of practical moment; but it possesses some historical interest as marking the final disappearance of the once extensive code of laws, which disqualified in various ways the men who bore a part in the Secession movement.

If, however, those disqualifying enactments are now repealed, some of their most serious results still remain to disturb the normal play of political forces. In the first years of "reconstruction" at the close of the war, the white population of the South was suffering disfranchisement as the penalty of rebellion; and the new-made negro voters filled the legislative chambers and controlled the state governments. Subsequently the white voters were restored to their political privileges and speedily regained local power, generally by virtue of harsh measures which intimidated the negroes. The Republican party throughout the South stood as the synonym for negro domination; and the consequence has been that the South has for the most part been solidly democratic. It is true that the Free Silver doctrine has found peculiarly congenial soil in the

South. Nevertheless, the sweeping success of the Free Silver party throughout the Southern states in the election of 1896 was due, not so much to a deliberately formed public opinion on that subject, as to the mere fact that the Democratic party espoused the Free Silver cause, and the Southern white voters were first and above all Democrats, regardless of doctrines and platforms. Thus the mistaken policy of the period following the war, by which illiterate ex-slaves were put in possession of the southern state governments, left prejudices against the Republican name that formed a large factor in the Free Silver campaign of 1896 ; for to a majority of white men in the states where the negroes form approximately half of the population, Republican success has always been associated in some more or less vague way with the possibility of negro supremacy.

The smallness of the Southern vote in November, when compared with the vote in the North, shows clearly that the negroes have in most of the states ceased to form a considerable element in the electorate. In point of fact, the gradual readjustment of the Southern electorate may be said to constitute another important constitutional change, the full nature and extent of which had hardly been understood until the events of 1896 made it clear. The state of South Carolina, in which the negroes form three-fifths of the total population, has adopted a

new constitution, which went into effect on the first day of 1896, under which tests of literacy and intelligence are applied as a condition for the exercise of the franchise, in a manner intended to exclude a large majority of the coloured population from participation in elections. A similar arrangement has been in force for several years in the state of Mississippi; and there is a tendency throughout the South to erect educational and property barriers, with a view to the exclusion of the great mass of negro illiterates from the exercise of the suffrage, thus making the laws justify the existing facts. These arrangements are so flexible, and leave so much discretion in the hands of those who make up the voting registers in the various localities, that white illiterates are seldom shut out where negro illiterates would have no chance whatever. It is a curious fact that the state of South Carolina, in which negro voting is now practically abolished, cast less than one-fourth as many votes in the recent presidential election as the northern state of Minnesota, although the two states were at the last apportionment accorded equal representation in the national House of Representatives, and are supposed therefore to be about equal in population. While the tendency towards the legal suppression of the negro vote in the South would seem to be in clear violation of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the post-bellum amendments to the Federal Constitution, the results in the

end may prove in many ways advantageous to the negro race. For with the race question in abeyance as a political issue, the Southern white people will find it possible to divide naturally upon the questions that cause party divisions in the North; and nothing is so much to be desired in the South as the free and healthy growth of public opinion.

The supposed necessity of keeping the coloured population in a position of due humility and dependence, has had much to do with the frequency of homicides in the South and the frightful prevalence of lynch law executions. It is worth while to observe, therefore, that one of the most notable American movements of the year 1896 has been the anti-lynching demonstrations in the South. The governors of most of the Southern states have declared themselves with great earnestness on this subject, and various legislatures have taken action.

A large majority of the Indian population surviving in the United States is to be found in the great preserve known as the "Indian Territory." Most of the denizens of the Indian Territory belong to what are called the "Civilized Tribes." Their civilization, it should be said, appears to advantage only when compared with the nomadic habits and savage customs of the Sioux and other Indian tribes that are to be found upon a number of temporary reservations in the far Western states and territories. The political condition of the civilized tribes in the

Indian Territory has long been a curious anomaly. The territory has no representation of any kind in the Federal Congress, and the tribes are supposed to exercise a complete internal sovereignty. But their territory has become the resort of many outlaws from the neighbouring states, and its unassimilated condition has become seriously inconvenient on many accounts. For several years a special Commission appointed by the Government of the United States, under the chairmanship of ex-Senator Dawes, of Massachusetts, has been endeavouring to negotiate treaties with the tribes of the Indian Territory, in pursuance of which —after allotments out of the lands now held in common have been made to each Indian family—the territory shall be thrown open to settlement by white colonizers, reduced to the recognised political status of an American territory like Arizona or New Mexico, and thus, after a period of tutelage, brought regularly into the position of a state in the Union. The completion of this difficult and delicate task cannot be ascribed to the year 1896. But it would seem, from reports published in the closing days of the year, that the principal obstacles have been overcome, and that the abolition of the old Indian Territory may now be considered practically assured. The year has seen steady progress—as regards the tribes on the reservations—in the policy of the gradual allotment of lands to Indian families, accompanied by the extension of full political rights, and

the promotion of the aborigines to the status of full-fledged American citizenship. The Government subsidies previously granted to religious denominations for the support of Indian schools on the reservations were withdrawn in 1896, and the amount voted for the Government's own system of Indian schools was much increased. Thus the year has witnessed the final settlement of the Mormon question, and some interesting new phases in the treatment of the Indian and the Negro questions.

While touching upon these matters affecting population elements, it is worth while perhaps to note the fact that the year 1896 has witnessed the passage through one House of Congress of a very important Bill, establishing an educational qualification for the admission of immigrants from foreign countries. There was some expectation that the measure might pass both Houses, receive the presidential signature, and become a law before the end of the year 1896. But although this end has not been accomplished, there seems much reason to believe that it will succeed at an early day. It is not required by this measure that the adult immigrant should be able to read and write understandingly the English language, but he must have a good acquaintance at least with the language of the country from which he comes, and be able to read, write, and explain in some language any part of the Constitution of the United States. The character of foreign immi-

gration to America has greatly changed within a very few years. Immigrants no longer come predominantly from the British Islands and Germany, but from Italy, Russia, and the Austro-Hungarian empire. Polish Jews form a very large element of the recent immigration, and the percentage of illiterates, and of persons on other accounts not desirable as accessions to the population, is far higher than a few years ago.

Much attention has been called to the fact that the European-born, naturalized voters in the recent election supported Mr. McKinley and the gold standard platform to a very general extent. So far as this is true of the Germans, it was undoubtedly a deliberate and an intelligent position. Large masses of voters of other European nationalities, however, were swayed by considerations of an accidental character. It happens that in this election the enormous influx of eastern and southern European elements has not made for radicalism and yet it does not follow in the least that these elements are to be counted upon permanently as a conservative factor.

The Free Silver movement in the United States in 1896, beginning with the mine owners, grew into an essentially agrarian movement. Its alliance with the organised labour movement was not perfectly cemented nor strikingly successful. The labour unions were in favour of an income tax, and

were opposed to the sort of federal interference which had broken up the great railway strike at Chicago. They were not, at heart, much in favour of the free coinage of silver. The different elements which united in the support of Mr. Bryan do not agree as to the principal reason for their defeat. The old-fashioned Southern Democrats would seem inclined to consider the Chicago platform too radical at all points. The Western Free Silver men look back with some regret upon that undertone of social revolution which seemed to characterize the Chicago movement and which was met, throughout the East especially, by an outcry against Mr. Bryan as a leader of "socialists" and "anarchists." As for the organised labour element, its leaders would seem to be generally of the opinion that free silver was the fatal handicap that defeated Mr. Bryan.

Inasmuch as the free coinage of silver by the United States at the ratio of sixteen to one was the only really specific and definite plank in the Chicago platform—other questions being broached merely in a general way—it would seem fair and reasonable to take the view that the American people, in defeating Mr. Bryan, chose deliberately to maintain the existing measure of values, and to keep gold as the basis of their exchanges and transactions for so long a time as the commercial world in general continues to prefer the gold standard. If

the times should grow better and business should prosper, this verdict will probably be accepted as final. Indeed, whatever may happen as the result of the electoral contest of the year 1900, it is not likely that either of the great parties of the United States will again propose to make so radical a change in the standard of value as was attempted and condemned in 1896.

Never before has a question of this kind been made the chief issue in a great popular contest. Millions of American citizens gave a large part of their time and attention during the year 1896 to the study and discussion of monetary science. Such questions are not well adapted to settlement by *plebiscite* under universal suffrage. But the instinct of conservatism is generally deepened among honest and sagacious men as a result of such discussions ; and so it came to pass that the American people—who have not yet really learned much about those abstruse questions with which they assume so much familiarity—refused to render a verdict in favour of free silver coinage as a panacea for social ills. The effort to comprehend the bearings of the contest, and to vote in such a way as to help bring about the best results for the country, was undoubtedly a valuable moral discipline for the electorate.

The huge debate of four months' duration was conducted with an unusual prevalence of fair play,

and its methods and results may well be regarded as encouraging to all friends of Democratic institutions, even to those whose cause suffered defeat. Mr. McKinley carried twenty-three states and Mr. Bryan carried twenty-two. Mr. McKinley's states, however, had a much larger average representation in the electoral college than Mr. Bryan's. The most populous of the Bryan states were Missouri and Texas. Next came Georgia and Tennessee. The rest of Mr. Bryan's states were comparatively small in population, though large in area. All of them were either south of the Potomac River or west of the Mississippi. Mr. McKinley carried all of the Eastern states north of Virginia, and all of the middle Western states north of Tennessee and Missouri. Iowa and Minnesota gave large majorities for McKinley, while Nebraska and Kansas were carried by Mr. Bryan. The Pacific coast states of California and Oregon gave pluralities for McKinley, while North Dakota stood with its neighbour Minnesota; otherwise the far West, like the far South, gave the preference to Bryan and the Chicago platform.

The most noteworthy feature of the campaign from a picturesque point of view was the marvellous oratorical canvass made by Mr. Bryan, who achieved a record not before equalled in the annals of political speech-making. It is estimated that nearly fourteen million votes were polled, and Mr. McKinley's

popular plurality was about three-fourths of a million. Of the six million or more voters who cast their ballots for Mr. Bryan, that candidate had personally addressed a very considerable proportion. Between the date of his nomination at Chicago on the 10th day of July and the date of the election on the 3rd day of November, Mr. Bryan made approximately six hundred speeches in five hundred different cities and towns of twenty-seven states, addressing audiences estimated at an aggregate of nearly 2,500,000 people. Mr. McKinley, who was nominated by the Republicans of St. Louis on the 18th day of June, remained throughout the campaign at his home in the town of Canton, Ohio, where hundreds of thousands of citizens came from many states by special excursion trains, to pay their respects and listen to Mr. McKinley's careful and tactful speeches. The Republican campaign was managed with great vigour, and with unprecedented completeness of organisation, by Mr. Marcus Hanna, of Ohio, a wealthy manufacturer and an intimate friend of Mr. McKinley. The ablest speakers of the Republican party were brought into the field, and a stumping canvass was minutely organised throughout the entire country. But the most effective work was accomplished by means of the distribution of so-called "campaign literature." Several hundred million copies of books, pamphlets, and leaflets were distributed to the voters of the

country, most of this printed matter relating to questions of public finance. The methods of distribution employed were highly ingenious. Thus the electoral campaign of 1896 may be rightfully termed a campaign of popular education.

The Democratic party always exhibits structural weakness when confronted with responsibility. It has long been a party composed of fortuitous elements of opposition, rather than a compact organization of men agreeing upon the chief items of a positive programme. The consequence has been that Mr. Cleveland's Democratic Administration has resulted in exposing all the party's ragged edges and yawning cleavages. Mr. Cleveland has had firm policies, in the pursuance of which he has won more support and sympathy from the Republican Opposition than from the members of his own party. His antagonism to measures for the rehabilitation of silver was well known to the Democratic party, and to the country, when he was nominated for the Presidency in 1892; but at that time the free silver sentiment of the West had looked rather to the Republican than to the Democratic party for ultimate support. It was only the rapid development of silver sentiment throughout the South, in consequence of the quiet propaganda of the years 1894 and 1895, that made it gradually clear to the Free Silver leaders that their best hope lay in a bold effort to capture the

National Presidential Convention of the Democratic party. This very drift of the leaders of the monetary heresy into alliance with the Southern Democracy, had its natural reactionary effect upon the Republican party, and helped to give clearness and definiteness to a position that otherwise might have been left ambiguous. Mr. Cleveland found the majority of the Eastern Democratic leaders in sympathy with him, but the balance of power in the party lay far to the South ; and thus the anti-Administration leaders controlled a clear two-thirds majority in the Chicago convention. In the end they found themselves virtually supporting the Republican platform and candidates.

At the very time when the Treasury deficits, due to the general depression of trade and to the inadequacy of the Wilson Tariff Law of 1894, had resulted in serious embarrassments which the Free Silver obstructionists in the Senate refused to relieve, Mr. Cleveland's message to Congress on the question of the Venezuela boundary dispute greatly aggravated the difficulties of the financial situation. The alarmed state of the money market in London led hundreds of holders of American securities to offer their investments for sale at any price they could obtain. Thus an enormous mass of railway bonds and shares, together with many other forms of American securities, was sent to New York, gold being demanded in return. The American currency

system, by virtue of which the Government must keep in circulation some hundreds of millions of Treasury notes which it is obliged to redeem in gold upon presentation and then to re-issue again, naturally makes the United States Treasury the repository of the country's ultimate coin reserve. It is troublesome and expensive for the banks to keep huge quantities of gold in their vaults; and the American banks have therefore preferred to hold their own reserves in the form of "greenbacks" (United States Treasury notes), with the knowledge that whenever gold is needed for the settlement of international balances it can readily be procured at the Sub-Treasury in Wall Street, upon the presentation of notes for redemption. Since the period of the resumption of specie payments nearly twenty years ago, it has been the rule of the Treasury to hold in reserve (besides other cash on hand) at least \$100,000,000 in gold, in order to make it reasonably certain that redemption demands can be met. So long as the ordinary revenues are ample, and confidence in the ability of the Government to redeem its notes promptly is unshaken, the balance of trade meanwhile remaining normal, it is obvious that the gold reserve can be easily maintained. At times it has risen to a figure enormously beyond the minimum of \$100,000,000. But in the early part of the year 1896 there coincided (1) a continued state of serious deficit in the ordinary revenues;

(2) a widespread condition of commercial depression ;  
(3) an abnormal tendency to hoard gold by reason of the uncertainties involved in the silver agitation, and last, but not least, the wild panic and frenzied apprehensions produced by the talk of war between England and the United States. The President's Venezuelan message was followed by so rapid a disappearance of the Treasury stock of gold as to threaten the Government's ability to maintain the parity of the somewhat numerous elements of the national currency.

Mr. Cleveland appealed to Congress in a special message for prompt action to relieve the financial situation. The House of Representatives responded at once with the so-called "Dingley Bill" to increase the revenues, also readily granting to the President the right to issue gold loans of a temporary character at his discretion. But the obdurate Senate stood like a rock against any measure of relief which should not be joined with a provision for the free coinage of silver. Accordingly, Mr. Cleveland fell back upon an old power vested in the Treasury Department more than twenty years ago, and much out of date in its details. Bonds having the par value of \$100,000,000, running for thirty years and bearing 4 per cent. interest, were offered for popular subscription. The result was gratifying, inasmuch as the amount was subscribed many times over, and the premium was high enough

to bring the Government a net return of about \$111,000,000. Loans raised in the previous year by Mr. Cleveland had been negotiated through New York and London banking syndicates, on the agreement that the gold offered the Government should be brought from Europe. In the case of this popular loan of 1896, much of the gold borrowed by the Government was drawn out of the already shrunken Treasury reserve, and then paid back for the bonds. The reserve gradually fell again until it was well below the minimum line of \$100,000,000. By this time the campaign had fairly opened, and it was believed that any further loans made for the avowed purpose of maintaining the gold standard might result in turning the scale in favour of the Free Silver party. Accordingly, the New York banks decided to come to the relief of the Treasury, and they voluntarily deposited gold in sufficient amounts to keep the reserve above the normal line.

The abundance of the American crops, in a season when European crops were short and when other outlying sources of European supply were greatly diminished, resulted in a large export movement of American wheat and other breadstuffs at high prices, thus turning the balance of trade very decisively in favour of the United States, and reversing the movement of gold. So strong was the flow of gold into the United States that all danger of further raids upon the Government reserve en-

tirely disappeared; and thus the closing months of the year 1896 witness a Treasury full of funds by virtue of the great sums Mr. Cleveland had borrowed, and full of gold as a consequence of the altered condition of foreign exchange. Mr. Cleveland's operations will have resulted in the maintenance of the Government's credit through a peculiarly trying season, but at a cost of an increase of the national bonded debt during his term of office by a sum approaching \$300,000,000. Although Mr. Cleveland's loans were all made ostensibly for the protection of the gold standard, it must be remembered that the Treasury deficits through his entire term will have resulted in the disbursement of perhaps nearly \$200,000,000 of these borrowed amounts for ordinary current expenses. It has been stoutly maintained by Senator Sherman and other leading Republican financiers and politicians, that if the McKinley Tariff Law of 1890 had not been superseded by the Wilson Law, the revenues would have been equal to the outgoes, and the gold reserve could have been maintained without recourse to loans.

Upon the election of Mr. McKinley in November, it was quite generally believed that the Senate would cease its obstructive tactics, and would allow some colourless measure for the increase of revenue to be passed. But this expectation was abandoned when the expiring Congress met for its last session

early in December. It is now understood that Mr. McKinley, upon taking the Presidential chair on the 4th of March, will without delay call the new Congress (elected in November) to meet in special session for the purpose of providing the Government with ample revenues. The new House of Representatives will have a Republican majority of at least seventy-five. It is not yet known whether or not the new Administration's tariff and revenue policy can enroll a clear majority of supporters in the Senate. It is said that several Western Free Silver Senators, formerly Republicans, will support a Protective Tariff Bill, laying the currency question aside for the present, and that the new measure will be successful. Undoubtedly the Tariff Bill of 1897 will be moderate in its protection features as compared with the Bill of 1890, but it will repair some of the gaps in the protective system made by the enactment of three years ago.

Meanwhile, Mr. McKinley has been undergoing a siege of office-seekers at his Ohio home. Many thousands of men desiring appointments under the new Administration have made pilgrimages to Canton to present their claims to recognition for personal or party services. They have been received with patient courtesy, but with no promises nor encouragement. It seems that these seekers for a share in the spoils of victory have not quite comprehended the greatness of the revolution in the

administrative system of the United States that has been accomplished in the midst of the strenuous events of the year 1896. The reform of the American civil service has been a steady growth for many years; but its largest advance has been due to orders issued by Mr. Cleveland in May, by which, at a single stroke, some 30,000 or 40,000 places formerly subject to executive patronage were brought under the Civil Service Act, and will be protected henceforth from political and personal influence. Altogether, the number of positions in the civil service of the United States, which are now subject to competitive examination under rigid and impartial rules, is rapidly approaching 100,000. Thus the spoils-men have been despoiled; and their dominion is for ever taken away. It remains to adopt some plan for taking the small postmasterships of the country out of the sphere of party politics. In all the large post-offices the clerks and employees are already under the merit system; and some way will probably be found, within the period of Mr. McKinley's Administration, for the removal of the minor post-offices from the wrangles of petty spoils-men. The eagerness for spoils which in former Presidential elections had so deeply affected the motives and methods of campaign work, played a comparatively small part in the great electoral contest of 1896. Thus administrative reform is destined to exercise a wholesomely purifying

political influence. When the offices are not at stake, the temptation to bribe voters, to "stuff" ballot boxes, to forge false returns, or otherwise to tamper with the freedom and fairness of elections, is in large measure removed. The progress of administrative reform has been marked in the state and municipal services, as well as in the service of the Federal Government. Chicago in 1896 has completely transformed its municipal departments by putting into practice a rigid merit system, while New York also has great improvement to show in the same direction. Several other hopeful instances might be brought into the list.

In the field of general legislation there is not very much of importance to report. The people of California, on general election day in November, defeated by a decisive popular vote a proposed amendment to the Constitution granting full suffrage rights to women. The state of Idaho, however, adopted such an amendment; and henceforth women will have precisely the same political duties and privileges as men. In the three states of Colorado, Wyoming and Utah, women participated in the Presidential election. It cannot be said that the movement for the enfranchisement of women appears to be gaining ground in the older states. In the state of New York an important measure known as the "Raines Law" has greatly increased the amount of yearly tax levied upon each dealer in intoxicating liquors,

with the result of an unexpectedly large state revenue from that source. South Dakota has receded from its position as a prohibitory state, the Constitution having been so amended as to permit the selling of liquor. The Prohibition movement has unquestionably lost ground, at least temporarily; and the once hopeful Prohibition party almost disappeared in the electoral contest of 1896. One may search the records at Washington in vain for evidence of any noteworthy domestic legislation for the year 1896. The time of Congress was taken up with discussions, for the most part, fruitless, of financial questions and matters relating to foreign policy. Meanwhile, the usual appropriation bills were passed, and the policy of naval development was endorsed by the ordering of several additional battleships.

The year began with one sensation in the country's foreign relations, and ended with another. Early in 1895, Congress passed a resolution calling upon the President to use his influence to secure settlement, by arbitration, of the disputed boundary line between the Republic of Venezuela and the colony of British Guiana. Venezuela had long been seeking in vain for such a solution. Mr. Olney, as Secretary of State, entered into correspondence with the British Government upon the question in the summer of 1895, with the result that arbitration was flatly refused by Lord Salisbury, while the

Monroe Doctrine,—in the spirit of which the United States had expressed its interest in the question,—was dismissed in a manner that savoured both of derision and of contempt. In his annual message on the opening of Congress in December, 1895, Mr. Cleveland referred to the Venezuelan situation at considerable length, intimating that a final answer from Lord Salisbury was expected soon, and that the entire correspondence would at an early date be laid before Congress. Two weeks later, on December 17, Mr. Cleveland fulfilled this promise. He sent to Congress the long despatches that had passed between Mr. Olney and Lord Salisbury, and accompanied them with a message of his own in which he broached his plan of an American Commission which should look into the merits of the controversy and report, for the future guidance of the United States, on the true divisional line between Venezuela and British Guiana. Congress promptly and unanimously approved of the President's plan, and voted the money necessary for its fulfilment. After some time spent in deliberation, Mr. Cleveland announced the appointment as members of the Venezuelan Commission of the following gentlemen: Justice Brewer, of the United States Supreme Court; Chief Justice Alvey, of the Supreme Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia; Dr. Andrew D. White, recently Ambassador to Russia, and formerly President of Cornell University; Mr. Frederick R.

Coudert, of New York City, a distinguished international lawyer, and President Daniel C. Gilman, President of the Johns Hopkins University. The appointment of this commission would not in itself of necessity have threatened to disturb international relations. But much excitement was caused by the concluding sentences of Mr. Cleveland's message, in which he declared it to be the duty of the United States, after the commission had reported, "to resist by every means in its power as a wilful aggression upon its rights and interests, the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands, or the exercise of Governmental jurisdiction over any territory, which, after investigation, we have determined of right belongs to Venezuela."

While it was regretted by many conservative minds in the United States that the President had not omitted this sentence, there can be no doubt of the fact that the message was received throughout the country with enthusiastic approval. The course which Great Britain had pursued for many years in relation to the Venezuelan boundary had led to the conviction in the United States that there had been a deliberate policy of encroachment, in accordance with which the pretended boundary line had been repeatedly altered so that Great Britain's territorial claims had in the course of forty years been amplified several fold. Lord Salisbury's contemptuous treatment of the Monroe Doctrine, moreover, keenly

touched American sensibilities. While there was no desire for war with Great Britain, there was not, on the other hand, any general fear or dread of such a conflict. It was generally believed that Great Britain would recede from her position and allow the dispute to be arbitrated, rather than incur war with the United States. It was the sincere feeling of the American people that they were contending righteously and unselfishly for a necessary principle; and that, if a stand were not made in this case, it would not be many years before Europe's desperate game of land-grabbing which now involves the whole of Asia and Africa, would be extended to South America. The people of the United States look upon the soil of South America as belonging by right to the South Americans. They consider the remnants of European possession in the Western Hemisphere not as permanent facts, but as transient anomalies. Instead of the absorption of Venezuela by the moribund colony of British Guiana, with its mere handful of white colonists and its quasi-slave population of East Indian coolies, the people of the United States would rather anticipate in the natural order of things the absorption of British Guiana by the crude but growing Republic of Venezuela. So much for the American point of view. The intensity of feeling in the United States was increased by the insolence of the London Press, which made no attempt to assist in a peaceful and reasonable solu-

tion, but which frankly gloried in its astounding ignorance of the historical, geographical and diplomatical facts involved in the controversy.

The startling news of the abortive Jameson raid, followed by the menacing attitude of Germany, quite radically altered the state of British public opinion. The relative aspect of things was shifted. The desire on the part of the United States to have an obscure boundary line in the swamps of South America delimited by arbitration, did not after all, upon sober second thought, seem so unreasonable. The American Commission, moreover, was found to be going at its work in a most deliberate and thorough manner. It was composed of men of reputation for learning, and also for probity and breadth of view. The British Government, which at first seemed disposed to resent the appointment of the Commission, changed its attitude and rendered every possible assistance in presenting the facts upon which the British contention rested. Meanwhile the friends of peace and amity among the English-speaking peoples bestirred themselves mightily on both sides of the Atlantic. Great meetings in favour of arbitration were held, having as their object not only the solution of the dispute over the Venezuelan boundary, but also the establishment of a permanent arrangement for the arbitration of all disputes between Great Britain and the United States. In the course of the subsequent

correspondence between Mr. Olney and Lord Salisbury, the possibility of arriving at an understanding was soon discovered; and at length, when it was known that the American Commission was about ready to report, the public was informed of the completion of an arbitration agreement. The request of the United States for the arbitration of the whole question in dispute between Venezuela and England was granted by Lord Salisbury, with the proviso, however, that as regards the ultimate destiny of settled districts the rules of good sense and practical justice should be followed. It was finally arranged that actual settlement without dispute of title for a period of fifty years might be regarded as establishing complete and permanent title. It remained for Venezuela to accept this arrangement; and the closing days of the year brought assurance that the little Republic would make no objection. Thus a question which ought long ago to have been adjusted upon its pure merits by an impartial tribunal, is now tardily removed from a position where it threatened for a time to make serious trouble.

Throughout the year the war in Cuba has attracted much attention from America, and after the close of the electoral contest the friends of Cuban independence in the United States were especially active in their endeavour to secure American intervention. In his message to Congress early in

December, President Cleveland reviewed the Cuban situation at great length. He expressed himself as clearly in favour for the present of the continuance of the American policy of strict neutrality, although he intimated that if Spain did not succeed in quelling the rebellion, higher considerations might make it the duty of the United States to secure peace for the distracted inhabitants of the island of Cuba. The American government has, throughout the year, exercised great diligence and incurred heavy expenditure in attempting to prevent the fitting out upon American soil of armed expeditions against the Spanish sovereignty. The private sale of arms and the transport of munitions of war do not violate international obligations; and it is undoubtedly true that the insurgents have been constantly receiving enormous quantities of supplies of all sorts from their friends and sympathisers in the United States. But Mr. Cleveland and his administration have not been lax in their firm attempts to enforce the neutrality laws, and Spain has had no cause of grievance against the United States.

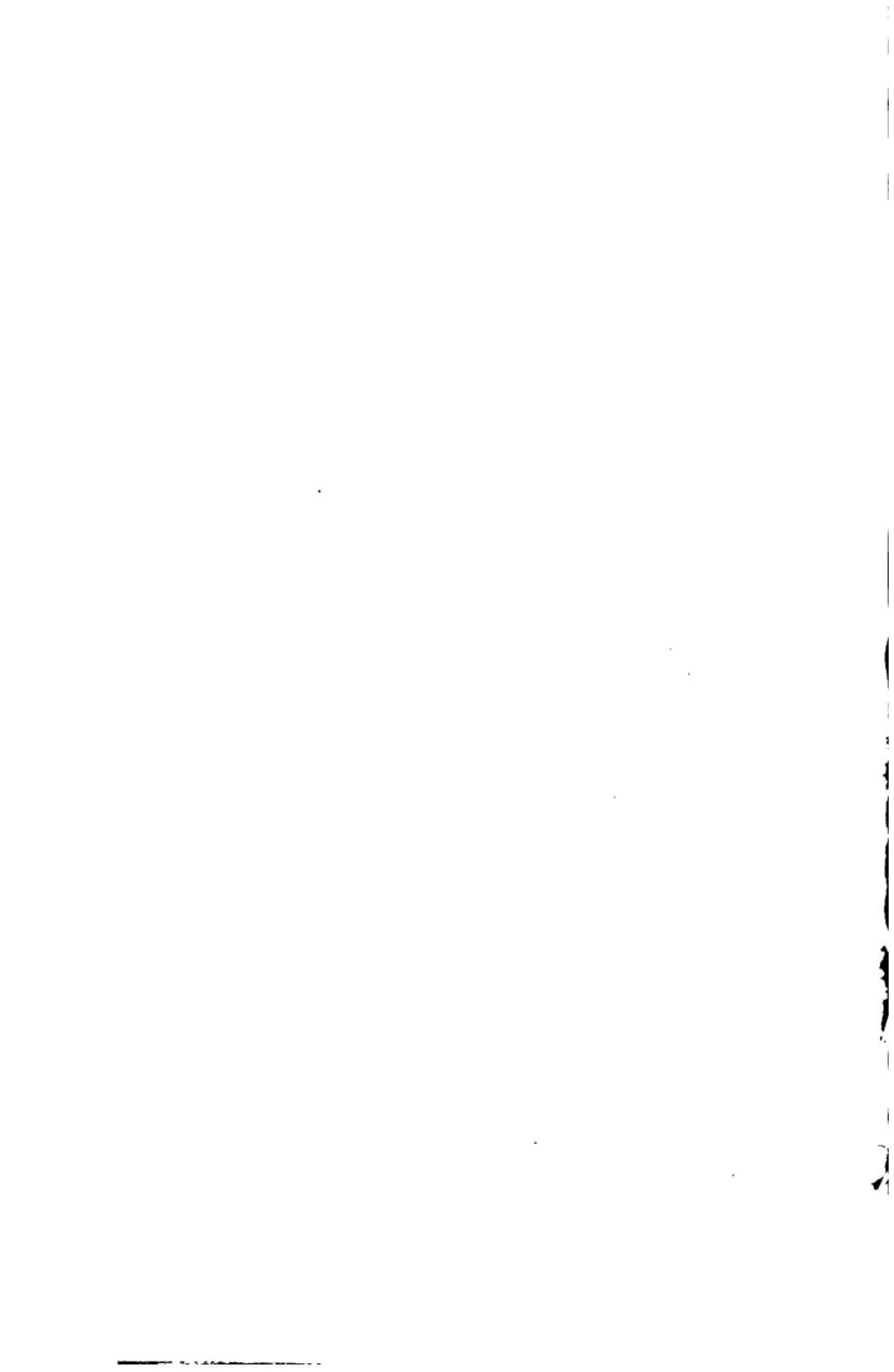
It is not strange that Spanish sentiment should be stirred up against America in view of resolutions introduced and speeches made in the Senate, and in further view of the general attitude of the American Press. It happens, however, that there is nothing in neutrality laws or obligations that can check expressions of sympathy for a brave people struggling

for political independence. The citizens of the United States, with practical unanimity, are heartily desirous of the success of the Cuban rebellion, although it is not true that they have any selfish ends in view. There is almost no sentiment whatever in the United States in favour of the annexation of Cuba, but there is an earnest detestation of the cruelty, treachery and rapacity of Spanish administration. If the Cuban rebellion should so gain ground as to result in the establishment of a visible and responsible government, actually exercising authority,—comparable, for instance, with the government established at Richmond by the Southern Confederacy,—public opinion would probably compel the Government of the United States to recognise Cuban belligerency, and at the earliest possible moment to acknowledge Cuban independence. But nothing in the facts of the situation at the end of the year 1896 would seem to make any such recognition possible, unless it were plainly intended as an act of hostility to Spain, and equivalent practically to a declaration of war. The question has arisen whether the right to recognise a new state belongs exclusively to the President, or may also be exercised by Congress. The highest authorities are almost unanimous in agreeing that the authority belongs exclusively to the President. It is certain that Mr. Cleveland does not intend to involve the United States in war with Spain; and

it may be confidently believed that Mr. McKinley will no less staunchly favour the maintenance of peaceful relations.

The year closed with the announcement that the terms of a general arbitration treaty between England and the United States had been definitely agreed upon, and that the arrangement would have a preliminary duration of five years. This result,—following the appointment earlier in the year of a joint commission to fix the damages due on account of the police policy formerly exercised by the United States for the protection of seals in the Behring Sea, and accompanying the agreement for arbitration of the Venezuela boundary dispute,—affords the world a beneficent example which must have no small influence upon the future course of international controversies.

ALBERT SHAW.



## V. LONDON

How is it that, of all the capitals of the world, London is the most Conservative in politics ? It is the one great capital city which does not lead the nation. Berlin, Brussels, Vienna, with their narrow and privileged franchises, show by their Parliamentary and municipal representatives the trend of national progressive politics. Paris, with her free and unrestricted democracy, has always been well in advance of France and the times, without—fortunately perhaps—carrying the nation forward at the same pace. New York, the metropolis of America, the seat of the money power, the home of millionaires, has just shown that she is ahead of the country by coming within an ace of accepting the crude economic Radicalism of Mr. Bryan. But London never leads. No capital of the world makes its influence less felt in a national cause. If a wave of progressive feeling sweeps over the country at a general election, London is affected by the current, but moves forward at a slower pace than the provinces. When the returning tide of reaction comes, London is readily carried back-

ward, and recedes to a greater extent than the rest of the country. But she does not lead, even in reaction.

Never perhaps has London Liberalism reached such a low ebb as at the present time. The Conservative landslide of 1895 found the metropolis congenial ground, and the minority Liberal representation was almost extinguished. The Liberal members were reduced to a forlorn eight. And in ten out of the fifty-eight constituencies the party had not sufficient courage to show fight. I may be reminded that in former years London was the mouthpiece of the nation—the pioneer of progress—and that the party who are most satisfied that her attitude is now the best, are those who are most ready to glorify her old rebellious and radical spirit; but a comparison with to-day is fallacious. Not only is the franchise different: the conditions have changed: the motives of political action are not the same. I do not suggest that the people of London would have benefited enormously, or at all, had their political representatives been of a different class: I am only here noting the characteristics of London politics and the place which the city holds politically in national life.

And what is the explanation of this preponderating Conservatism? It is commonly put down to apathy, and latterly the working classes have been called the most apathetic. Judged in the ordinary way of

comparing the electors on the register with the percentage polled, the charge of apathy cannot be maintained. At the last general election an average of 68·5 per cent. of the electors polled in the contested constituencies. This is almost exactly the same as the percentage who vote in Paris, and only slightly less than the average throughout the country at the last general election. If an allowance be made for the absent, the removals, and the deaths, the percentage compared with the maximum voting capacity does not indicate a great amount of apathy. And it is worth noting that it is not in working-class constituencies like Bermondsey, Greenwich, or Limehouse that the percentage of voters is lowest, but in "respectable" suburban districts like Brixton, Dulwich, and Wandsworth, where a sense of security in the predominant party does not promote great activity.

It is probably not fair to judge the feeling of the majority of the people in London by the majority of their political representatives. London Liberalism, as expressed by its party exponents, has not been of a very robust type, and it is obvious that the London masses are not so preponderatingly Conservative as to return fifty-one Conservatives out of fifty-nine members if the whole people could express an opinion. And it is here that probably an explanation of the backward position of London in the political world may be found: our anomalous fran-

chise system hits London very hard. Our registration system seems to be artfully designed to keep people off the voters' list, and to get them off if, in spite of the system, they accidentally get on. London, for registration purposes, is not regarded as one London, but as a number of distinct boroughs. A voter, for instance, may carry his vote with him if he moves from the Highgate corner of St. Pancras southwards four miles, to Bloomsbury, but if he move eastwards into an adjoining street in Islington, he is disfranchised. It is difficult enough to get on, as the qualifying period may mean anything up to the time the vote can be used, from one year and a half's residence in a place to over two years. Thus the class who move from one quarter of London to another find it is impossible to retain their votes. Workmen and lodgers are to a large extent nomadic classes, and many of them are numbered among the great unpolled. In democratic Paris there are more voters than in London, although the population is about one-half less. In Paris there is a voter for every 3·71 inhabitants ; in London there is only one voter for every 7·62 inhabitants. In Manchester the proportion of voters is one to 6·93 ; and in Birmingham one in 5·83. The system which operates in London to keep a certain class off the register enables another class—owners of property—to have more than one vote. There is nothing to prevent a man who has material interests in all the metro-

politan boroughs from voting in every one of them on the same day. Such, then, is the present situation of London politics and the cause which brings it about. Nothing has occurred in 1896 to indicate any change of feeling, and a retrospect must be confined to local and municipal politics.

Before noticing the movements of the year in this respect, it will be well to survey the circumstances which led up to the present interregnum in municipal politics. The London County Council, established in 1888, was the first central elective authority which the metropolis possessed. Up to 1856 a tangle of over three hundred petty parochial authorities had misgoverned the congeries of boroughs, parishes, and hamlets, which together formed the vast city-province which had then no well-defined boundaries. The privileged municipal oasis of the City represented all the organised government which existed. Administrative Vestries and District Boards were created by the Metropolis Management Act, but the system of election was very primitive, and they did not come under the Municipal Franchise until 1894. The same Act of 1856 established the Metropolitan Board of Works, constituted by delegates from the Vestries. Not therefore until January, 1889, had the people of London the opportunity of directly expressing their opinions on municipal affairs. Fortunately the establishment of the London

County Council was coincident with an awakening interest in civic affairs, which soon led to vast improvements in local administration. This healthy civic spirit and the enthusiasm which the grant of a democratic Parliament to London created, carried the Progressives into power with a majority of 28, which they promptly strengthened by the nomination of sympathetic aldermen. This first Council gave a tremendous impetus to progress, not only in London but throughout the country. The second Council carried on the progressive work with greater vigour, having obtained a majority of 48 members at the elections. It initiated new schemes, it promoted numerous Bills, it attacked vested interests. It vastly increased the facilities for public enjoyment in the parks and pleasure grounds; it built dwellings for the working classes, and established a Works Department. It threatened the great vested interests of the water and tramway companies; it assailed the privileges of the City Corporation, and in fact touched so many interests that prodigious efforts were made to stem the progressive tide. By skilful organising, regardless of expense, backed up by the threatened monopolists, and by running candidates of high social standing, the Moderate party succeeded in 1895 in returning exactly half the councillors. Each party went back with 59. With the help of the aldermen the Progressives were able to retain power, but conceded

four new aldermen to the Moderates, nominated four themselves, while the ninth was understood to be neutral, but he was soon regarded as a member of the Moderate party. A council thus equally divided could not be expected to do much work, and many schemes under way had to be stopped. On the whole the Progressives succeeded in holding their own, and in maintaining their policy on the most important questions, such as the water problem and unification. Many of the new Moderates had no experience of municipal work, and some of them did not attend regularly to learn. The Conservative triumph at the general election in the middle of the year put new spirit into the party, and it also put them in control of the Parliamentary committee, which is the mainspring of the Council's policy as it is the committee which formulates new legislative proposals. This change was brought about by the custom of making every member of Parliament who is on the Council a member of the Parliamentary committee, in an *ex officio*, but equally effective capacity. The Moderates did not relish power. They produced an impossible water scheme which the Council rejected, and then they retired. Before the end of the year the Moderates captured a seat in Bethnal Green from the Progressives, and thus obtained a majority of the elected councillors—60 to the Progressives' 58. In March, 1896, the Moderates claimed half the com-

mittee chairmanships, and made a bid for the chairmanship and control of the Council without really, for tactical reasons, desiring it. Sir Arthur Arnold who was originally the Progressive nominee, was continued in the chair; Dr. W. J. Collins, one of the ablest men on the Progressive side, was made vice-chairman, and Alderman R. Melvill Beachcroft, who from a municipal point of view was the strongest man among the Moderates, became deputy-chairman. And here it may be noted that the Moderates succeeded in stopping the system of making the deputy-chairman a paid officer of the Council, as they resented Mr. W. H. Dickinson, a Progressive—who was defeated at the election but afterwards made an alderman—retaining the office. Another change to note which affected the constitution of the Council, was that Sir Arthur Arnold, the chairman, who had not been a member—as it was not necessary for his office—was elected an alderman in place of a Progressive, thus practically reducing the Progressive voting power by one. During the year, therefore, the Council has consisted of 69 Progressives and 67 Moderates, and the chairman. The contests became keener than ever and the divisions closer. Success depended largely on organisation and party loyalty, and both parties have had a share of the victories.

The three great struggles of the year have centred round the Water Supply, the Tramways and

the Works Department. A Moderate would describe the attitude of the Progressives as ruthlessly aggressive, regardless of the result to private interests. A Progressive would say that Moderates were bent on protecting monopolies, and forgetful of public interests. Before reviewing the result of the discussions on the above questions, it will be well to understand the type of municipal statesmen with whom we are dealing. London has evolved two distinct types who have no counterpart in other towns. There is the Progressive who feels that his city is so deplorably behindhand in municipal affairs, that he burns with an insatiable zeal to serve it; to municipalise our common services and to build up a magnificent civic structure. He is a crusader animated by the highest conception of citizenship. He tilts at every monopoly, and if he cannot go ahead on conventional lines, finds new fields for municipal activity. On the whole he looks at questions first from a municipal standpoint, and from a political party aspect afterwards. Then there is the Moderate who is a unique type. He is more inclined to regard everything from a political party point of view. By his action he leaves himself open to the accusation that he is more anxious to protect, and make good terms for, private monopolies, than to study public interests. He is also guilty of trying to belittle the body to which he belongs, and to narrow the sphere of municipal functions. In

these respects he is unique. In other towns of the United Kingdom all parties work to expand municipal institutions; to organise better for the community; to dignify their councils. They may differ as to the means adopted, but they are at one as to the end in view. Nor does elsewhere Conservatism in politics mean hostility to the development of municipal industries. As a matter of fact the towns which have carried municipal communism to the greatest length are under the control of the Unionist party. At the same time the London Moderates may honestly believe that they are doing the best for the community by opposing the control of the water supply by the County Council, but the public cannot forget that two members of the party are directors of water companies. They may be equally honest and conscientious in their desire to keep the tramways in private hands, but their opposition to the Council exercising its right of purchase cannot be overlooked. They may not object to maintain the Council's position in London government, but their sympathy with movements which would curtail its powers or abolish it cannot be concealed. In general administrative duties there is no reason to suppose that the Moderates are less desirous of securing efficiency than are the Progressives, except in the case of the Works Department, which they have always opposed on the ground that it was an unnecessary and expensive experiment.

On the question of water supply the attitude of the Moderate Party has varied according as it was influenced by its section which will not be reconciled to public control, or by the wing which takes a more enlightened view of municipal duties. The policy of the Progressives is, and always has been, complete municipalisation. Ever since the Council was established it has been discussing the water question, and if we are now not much nearer a solution than we were nine years ago, the Council is no more to blame than the successive governments, who for the last fifty years have been groping after a final settlement of the problem and never finding one. Royal Commissions and Select Committees have over and over again registered pious resolutions that the London water supply should be under public control; but the companies continue in possession, and during the last few years have caused the people more annoyance and given them less water than usual, while all the time the value of their undertakings increase. At the beginning of 1896 the County Council by a majority confirmed its Bills of the previous session for buying the undertakings of the water companies. The Moderates had sought without success to kill the measures whose parliamentary career had been interrupted by the general election, and urged that the Government should be asked to solve the water problem, Lord Salisbury, answering the Council's resolution

in favour of its Bills in January, said that the Government were considering the question. The Council also decided—again in face of the solid opposition of the Moderates—to continue its investigation of the scheme for introducing a supplementary water supply from Wales. On the 3rd March a resolution was passed again endorsing the Bills, and urging the Council's spokesmen in Parliament to move the second reading. The chairman of the Council had been authorised to open negotiations with the water companies in the hope of coming to terms, but he met with no encouragement. In the same month the House of Commons defeated the Council's Bills, and on the 30th March the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee, Mr. McKinnon Wood, brought up a report to the Council regretting that the terms of payment suggested by the Government "would involve the ratepayers in an enormous expenditure beyond the value of the undertakings, and had caused the destruction of the Council's Bills and the indefinite postponement of purchase." This bold endorsement of the Council's policy and condemnation of the Government was carried by a majority of six. Mr. Chaplin had, on behalf of the Government, stated, during the discussion on the ill-fated Bills, that the purchase should be under the Land's Clauses Consolidation Acts. This would mean that the water companies would receive the full market

value of their undertakings, plus 10 per cent. compensation, and it would preclude many things being considered which would be taken into account were the purchase on any other basis. The system is that which the water companies have always been eager to accept, but the Progressives on the County Council hold that municipalisation on such a basis would give the water companies more than they are fairly entitled to receive, and would further make purchase unprofitable to the community. They advocate an arbitration, under which the 10 per cent. compensation would be saved, but they do not seek to give the companies less than the fair and reasonable value of their property. The basis of purchase remains the main question in dispute, as the desirability of public control has long since been conceded by all parties.

In the meantime (16th May) the Government had produced the **Metropolitan Counties' Water Board Bill**, which constituted a commission not to purchase the water undertakings, but to seek powers with that object. It was to set up a water authority which would displace the County Council. There were to be 30 members, 16 nominated by the County Council, two each by the City Corporation, the County Councils of Middlesex and Essex, the Borough of West Ham, and one each by the County Councils of Herts, Surrey and Kent, and the Thames and Lea Conservancies. Like other Water Bills

this one had an unfortunate career, and was withdrawn at the end of the session, by which time very little of the original measure remained.

On 21st April the County Council once more endorsed its Welsh scheme by a majority of four.

The success of the session lay with the water companies, who introduced Bills empowering them to increase their supply by carrying out the Staines' Reservoir Scheme—recommended by the Royal Commission of 1891—and in other directions. These Bills were carried in a modified form, the companies being obliged to put up their new stock to auction, and to carry out the proposed works within a specified period. And the Select Committee who considered the Bills once more put in a protest against the perpetual waste of the time of Parliament over the London water question, and upheld the principle of public control.

During summer and autumn the water famine in the East End, which caused much misery, suffering, and disease, had evidently a sobering effect on Moderate County Councillors, as they consented to a round table conference with the Progressives. There was a lull in hostilities, and amiable confabulations were followed by an amicable agreement. The Progressives conceded much for the sake of peace: Moderates accepted the Council as the water authority, and gave over purchase under the Lands' Clauses Consolidation Act. All seemed as happy as

a marriage bell, but the leaders had reckoned without their host—the Moderate host at least—who would not listen to compromise. There was nothing for it but to revive the Transfer Bills and the wrangle in the Council, which became fiercer than ever after the temporary calm. The Council had authorised the Parliamentary Committee on 10th November to proceed towards the acquisition of the water supply in the way they might think best, and on 8th December the Committee recommended the Council to promote the Transfer Bills which had been prepared. An amendment by the Moderates, making purchase under the Transfer Bills optional, was defeated by a majority of two. Another amendment was defeated by two, and the Committee's report carried by 61 votes to 54. The Council at the end of the year was, therefore, in the same position on the matter as it had been at the end of the two previous years.

Parliament had allowed water companies to grow up unrestricted monopolies. It placed no limit to their existence, and made no provision for municipalisation. In the case of tramways, although not an absolute necessary of life, Parliament was more alive to public interest: it provided that tramway companies could be bought out after the lapse of twenty-one years for "the then value" of their undertakings. There was to be no compensation; nothing for goodwill, no consideration for past,

present, or future profits ; it was to be the net value of the lines and nothing more. It would have been folly for any municipality not to have acted up to the intention of Parliament as expressed by statute, but the Moderates on the County Council for several years endeavoured to prevent purchase. The Council first exercised its option by announcing its intention to buy four-and-a-half miles belonging to the London Street Tramway Company. There were legal delays—for our prescient legislators had not reckoned on the procrastination of the law—but ultimately the Council obtained the lines for £101,798, although the Company had asked £604,090. In 1892 notice was served on the North Metropolitan Company to give up nineteen miles. The possibilities of the law's delays were again exhausted. The Council won, but at the beginning of 1896 the Company were still in possession of tramways which ought to have been the property of the Council three years before, and were lying in wait for an appeal to the House of Lords. Meanwhile certain financial speculators of South Africa had been prospecting the tramway field, and thought they saw a mine of wealth in the London tramways. They tried to dazzle the County Council with a possible £200,000 a year from tramways if they could build up a huge monopoly for twenty-eight years. The Beit syndicate's offer was rejected, but it was probably owing to it that the North

Metropolitan Company came forward with an alternative scheme, so far as its lines, and those of its neighbour, the London Streets Company, were concerned. It proposed that the Council acquire the whole of the two systems at the same rate per mile as had been paid for the four-and-a-half miles already purchased, and then lease the whole system to the North Metropolitan Company on payment of a rental of £45,000 a year, and 5 per cent. of the increased receipts. The Company consented to accept a lease of fourteen years, *i.e.* to 1910, by which time all the tramway lines in London will have fallen in for purchase. The Highways Committee recommended this scheme, but on the 23rd June the Council requested the Committee to present alternative schemes—a shorter lease or operation by the Council—and to consider the possibilities of improved traction. The Committee considered, but again approved of the Company's proposal, as it was the scheme under which the rate-payers would receive the greatest amount of relief. During the fourteen years the Company would pay the Council £903,630, of which sum £463,907 would go in relief of rates. No provision was made for reduction of fares, or better treatment of the tramway employees. There were to be workmen's cars up to 7 a.m., and the wages of the men were not to be reduced or their hours lengthened. Were electric and other improved traction introduced,

the Council was to have three quarters of the profit therefrom after 5 per cent to the Company. On the 3rd November the Highway Committee's scheme was again sent back to enable the Finance Committee to improve the financial conditions which were held to be "not sufficiently advantageous to the Council." It was proposed by this committee that the Council should have 12½ per cent of the increase in the gross profits, 90 per cent of the additional profit accruing from improved traction, and that various other provisions be introduced in the lease for increasing the profits of the Council. The Moderates as a party were more eager to have the original lease accepted than to risk a break-down in the negotiations by demanding better terms from the company. They were supported in their attitude generally by one or two members of the Progressive party. Both sides were too much inclined to regard tramways as a means of raising relief to rates by a process of indirect taxation of the travelling public, and did not recognise that the object of tramways owned by the public should be to carry the greatest possible number of people at the lowest possible rates which would be remunerative. In the end the original terms of the proposed lease were, after several acrimonious discussions on 15th and 22nd December, improved upon, and as it now stands the Council will receive a rental of £45,000 a year plus 12½ per

cent. of the gross increase in revenue; it will get 80 per cent of the increased profits which may come from a new system of traction, and the Company will lay aside a sum annually to pay for repairs and reconstruction. The Moderates defeated amendments to the following effect: to make the lease for seven years instead of fourteen (defeated by 67 votes to 48); to terminate it at seven years on paying the Company compensation (defeated by 62 votes to 56); to increase the rental by £10,000 a year (defeated by 65 votes to 46); to provide for a ten hours' day to the tramway employees (defeated by 53 votes to 46); to improve the wages of the men (defeated by 45 votes to 41); to work the men only six days a week (defeated by 43 votes to 37); and to introduce halfpenny fares (defeated by 44 votes to 36). It was decided that workmen's cars be run up to 8 a.m., that tramway employees be treated as well as those employed by any other London tramway company.

While the heated discussions on the tramway question were taking place, in November and December a fierce attack was made on the Works Department. The Moderates declared war on the Works Department when it was established, and have kept up hostilities ever since. There was nothing revolutionary in the County Council becoming its own contractor, but the Works Department has always been seriously handicapped by friction

which arose between it and other departments and by the hostility of the Moderates—ten of whom were members of the Works Committee or Board of Management. What brought affairs to a crisis was the discovery by the Council's controller that officials of the Works Department, to evade hostile criticism and worrying inquiries, had made illegitimate transfers of material from one job to another in order to equalize profits and losses. No one benefited by this so-called "cooking of accounts"; as a matter of fact, the works executed up to the time of the inquiry, showed about £1,000 more "profit" than the Department had taken credit for. The officials who were responsible for the irregularities were dismissed, and an inquiry instituted by a committee of the Council into the whole record and organisation of the Department with the view of finding out whether it had justified its existence. That investigation is now being carried on. In a statement on the history of the Department, submitted to the committee by Mr. C. J. Stewart, the clerk of the Council, it is shown that the Department was established in November, 1892, owing to the fact that satisfactory tenders for certain work were not received. The custom of executing work without employing contractors had been tried by committees and found to answer well, and it was thought that a Works Department would act as contractor for all committees. The experiment was a new one

so far as the system of execution was considered. Municipalities throughout the country have carried on a large amount and variety of works by "direct labour," from the making of trams to the construction of water works ; but it was a new development to set up a preferential municipal contractor which should work for all committees if it found their estimates acceptable. This system was different from the practice of committees doing the work themselves, and was more calculated to give better results, but also to create friction. The Works Department was hedged round with numerous checks, and bound down to rigid rules. It expanded too rapidly before it had proper plant or an ample store of materials, and the mistake had been made of not paying sufficient to obtain the best organising skill at the head. Every year, however, its organisation was improving, and the record of its work was not discouraging. Independent officers have conceded that it has executed works as well, if not better, than contractors, but it is contended that the jobs could have been done cheaper by contractors. It is difficult to judge the Works Department on the ordinary commercial basis, as it may be reasonably asserted that the object of a Public Works Department is not to show a profit, but to execute the work in the best possible way to ensure the greatest durability, and thus give the public in the end the best value

for their money. The Clerk of the Council, in the statement above referred to, shows that since its establishment the Department has carried out works, estimated to cost £383,538, for £377,643, and, in addition to this "profit" of £5,905, has "saved" £1,961 in jobbing works, judged according to schedule prices. It has also paid interest of 2½ per cent. on its capital expenditure of £100,000, set aside contributions to a sinking fund to liquidate that capital and paid for maintaining the checks on its operations. The principle of direct labour, or the elimination of the middleman, is one which is practised with profit in private industrial concerns; but when a public body sets up an establishment to do its work on this system, all sorts of prejudices arise, and hostilities are provoked, which make it difficult to judge the matter from a common-sense and business point of view. This much may be admitted; the County Councils' Works Department developed too rapidly, it tackled too many highly specialised jobs too soon, it has been strained by a tangle of red tape, and its difficulties would have been lessened and its comparative success increased, had all parties, officers, and members united to improve its organisation. It is doubtful whether it can be fairly judged by a council almost equally divided, and dominated in this case, at least, by bitter partisan feeling.

Some attention was given during the year to the

question of unification—the union of the County Council and the City Corporation—and the reorganisation of London Government. Conferences between the vestries and the County Council were held at Spring Gardens with the view of drawing up a division of duties between the central and the local authorities. The result was not very satisfactory. The vestries sought more powers than the Council would like to give up, and there was a conflict of interests between the representatives of wealthy and poor districts. The resolutions passed by the conference may have some influence, but had no immediate effect. The City Corporation, finding itself safe from attacks from without, has resolved to unify its internal administration by amalgamating the Commission of Sewers with the Common Council, a Bill for which purpose has been introduced into Parliament. The Commission is the local sanitary and health authority, and consists of members delegated from the Common Council and armed with statutory powers.

The local authorities in Southwark have promoted a Bill seeking annexation to the City, where it receives a mixed reception. In Westminster, Kensington and Paddington, the movement in favour of incorporation has advanced a stage, and the opinion of the Privy Council is being sought as to whether the vestries of these parishes may obtain a charter of incorporation.

This year, besides the bills above referred to, affecting the City Corporation, and for the purchase of the water companies, measures will be before Parliament for powers to carry out several improvements, including the widening of the Strand at a cost of £569,130, the construction of a tunnel under the Thames at Greenwich, and the building of new offices for the County Council.

The most important events of local concern were the Vestry elections in May. The election of a third of the vestrymen did not, however, excite a great deal of interest. The result left the constitution of the bodies pretty much the same. The London Municipal Society, for the Moderates, claimed 124 Moderate gains against 42 Progressive gains, while the London Reform Union, for the Progressives, showed how the Progressives had won 141 seats and the Moderates 98. Both estimates were wrong. The issues were frequently so complicated that it is impossible to state the result accurately from a party point of view, but the results have not affected the policies of the vestries except in one instance. The local authorities have been doing a great deal of Progressive work during the last few years; electric lighting works are being laid down, new baths built, free libraries established, and administrative reforms carried out by vestries, whether they are nominally "Moderate" or avowedly "Progressive."

The work of the poor law guardians pursues its accustomed routine. Last year they had less claims on them than in the two previous years, and the unemployed problem, while always with us, has been less acute. A departmental committee was appointed by the Government to inquire into the system of poor law schools. In its report it has condemned the system of educating poor law children in barrack schools and of keeping them in workhouses, where diseases such as ophthalmia are prevalent, and where the misfortunes of the parents are visited upon the children, who suffer through life from the pauper taint. The committee recommended that the poor law children be merged in the general population by receiving more humane treatment and more individual attention under such systems as boarding-out certified homes and scattered cottage homes. Those who are ailing—who suffer from the numerous diseases which affect this class—would be classified and treated in institutions.

It was further proposed to create a central metropolitan authority to deal with poor law children, placing it under the Education Department in order to dissociate the pauper child from the stigma of pauperism.

The work of educating London's half-million of children has been carried on by the School Board with an increasing desire to obtain the best results. The constitution of the present Board somewhat

resembles that of the County Council, in that on each body parties are about equally balanced. On the School the Moderates are in a majority, although frequently divided among themselves; but in all departments the Progressives have made their influence felt, and in some instances their policy has prevailed. At the election which takes place in November next there will be a determined struggle for supremacy.

ROBERT DONALD.

## A DIARY FOR 1896

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- Jan.* 1. Jameson Raid. Defeat and surrender at Krugersdorp.  
Venezuelan Commission appointed by President Cleveland.
2. Telegram of Congratulation from German Emperor to President Kruger.
6. Resignation of Mr. Cecil Rhodes as Premier of Cape Colony.  
Sir Gordon Sprigg, Premier Cape Colony.  
National Reform Committee arrested in Johannesburg.
7. Flying Squadron formed.  
Dr. Jameson delivered to High Commissioner by President Kruger.  
Port Arthur handed over to Chinese by Japanese Government.  
Surrender of Johannesburg.
18. Ashanti Expedition. Submission of King Prempeh.
21. Shipbuilding Strike on Clyde. Closed by Amalgamated Society of Engineers.
22. Belfast (North)—

	<i>General Election.</i>
Sir Jas. Haslett (C.) . . . . .	Sir Edw. Harland (C.)
A. Turner (I.C.) . . . . .	Unopposed.

C. majority . . . . . 161

- Jan.* 28. South St. Pancras—

	<i>General Election.</i>
H. Jessell (L.U.) . . . . .	Sir J. Goldsmid (L.U.) 2,433
G. M. Harris (L.) . . . . .	G. M. Harris (L.) . . . . . 1,223

L.U. majority . . . . . 1,256      L.U. majority . . . . . 1,210

- Jan.* 30. Lambeth-Brixton—

	<i>General Election.</i>
Hon. E. Hubbard (C.) 4,493	Marquis of Carmarthen (C.) . . . . . 4,199
E. W. Nunn (L.) . . . . . 2,131	Sir Robert Head (L.) 2,199
C. majority . . . . . 2,362	C. majority . . . . . 2,000

- Feb.* 1. United States Senate pass Free Silver Bill (*see* Feb. 14).  
 5. Mr. Justin McCarthy resigns Chairmanship of Irish Parliamentary Party.  
 6. Interview, Mr. Cecil Rhodes with Mr. Chamberlain.  
 Annual National Conference of Miners at Westminster Palace Hotel.  
 8. Mr. Sexton elected Chairman Irish Parliamentary Party.  
 11. Opening of Parliament.  
 Sir Charles Tupper, Leader Dominion House of Commons.  
 14. *United States.* House of Representatives rejects Free Silver Bill.  
 17. Mr. Sexton refuses Chairmanship Irish Parliamentary Party.  
 18. Mr. John Dillon elected Chairman Irish Parliamentary Party.  
 Speech agreed to.  
 20. New Rules of Procedure for Discussing Supply moved by Mr. Balfour.  
 22. Lord Grey appointed Administrator of South Africa Company's Territories, in conjunction with Mr. Rhodes.

#### Montrose Burghs—

<i>Bye-Election.</i>		<i>General Election.</i>	
John Morley (L.) . .	4,565	T. S. Will, Q.C. (L.)	3,594
John Wilson (C.) . .	2,572	G. W. Baxter (L.U.)	2,462
L. majority . .	1,993	L. majority . .	1,132

#### Southampton—

<i>Bye-Election.</i>		<i>General Election.</i>	
Sir F. Evans (L.) . .	5,557	T. Chamberlayne (C.)	5,955
G. Candy (C.) . .	5,522	Sir B. Simeon (L.U.)	5,413
C. A. Gibson (Soc.) . .	278		
L. majority . .	35	Sir F. H. Evans (L.)	5167
		H. G. Wilson (L.) .	4,159
		J.R. Macdonald (I.L.P.)	866
		C. majority . .	246
		(T. Chamberlayne unseated on petition, Dec., 1895).	

*Feb.* 25. Dr. Jameson and Associates charged at Bow Street.

26. Staffs. Lichfield—

*Bye-Election.*

	<i>General Election.</i>
C. Warner (L.) . . .	4,483
Major L. Darwin (C.) .	3,955

L. majority . . . 528      L. majority . . . 44

*Feb.* 27. New Rules of Supply agreed, 202 to 65.

*United States* Foreign Relations Committee at Washington reports in favour of recognising Cuban rebels as belligerents.

28. House went into Committee of Supply.

*Mar.* 1. Defeat of Italian Troops under General Baratieri in Abyssinia.

2. *United States*. Resolution recognising Cuban insurgents as belligerents, passed by House of Representatives at Washington.

Naval Programme discussed in House of Commons.

4. Resignation of Italian Ministry.

10. Formation of New Italian Cabinet.

Resolution in favour of opening National Museums and Art Galleries on Sundays passed.

17. Resolution in favour of Rehabilitation of Silver agreed to.

19. Preliminary Inquiry into charges against Reform Committee closed at Pretoria.

20. *United States*. Resolutions censuring Mr. Bayard passed by House of Representatives at Washington.

Southern Division of Louth—

*Bye-Election.*

*General Election, 1895.*

R. McGhee (A.P.) . . .	1,626	Dr. D. Ambrose (A.P.)	2,006
Col. Nolan (P.) . . .	1,249	J. G. Fitzgerald (P.)	1,041
P. Callan (I.) . . .	469		

A.P. majority . . . 177      A.P. majority . . . 962

*Mar.* 20. Amendment implying Vote of Censure on Nile Expedition moved by Mr. J. Morley. Negatived, 288-145.

24. Motion for Second Reading of Chelsea Water (Transfer) Bill negatived, 287-125. Motions for Second Reading of other L.C.C. Water Bills also negatived.

- Mar. 26.** Matabele Revolt. Mr. Bentley and other whites killed.  
 27. President Kruger officially contradicted reported strained relations between Mr. Chamberlain and himself.  
 28. East Kerry—

*Bye-Election.*

Hon. J. B. Roche (A.P.N.)	1,961
J. McGillycuddy (C.)	680
A.P.Nat. majority	1,281

*General Election, 1895.*

Michael Davitt (A.P.)
Unopposed.
Was also elected unopposed for South Mayo, for which he decided to sit.

- April 1.** Education Bill issued.

5. South Kensington and Bethnal Green Museums opened for first time on Sunday.  
 6. House of Representatives in Washington declared in favour of recognising Cuban rebels as belligerents.

College Green (Dublin)—

*Bye-Election.*

James L. Carew (P.).	Joseph E. Kenny (P.).
Unopposed.	Unopposed.

*General Election.*

7. Independent Labour Party Annual Conference at Nottingham.  
 8. Johannesburg Reform Committee charged with High Treason.  
 11. Death of M. Tricoupi.  
 15. Dominion Government dropped the Manitoba Schools Remedial Bill.  
     Behring Sea Treaty ratified by United States Senate.  
 16. Budget introduced by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.  
 22. Resignation of French Cabinet of M. Leon Bourgeois.  
     Leaders of Reform Committee on trial at Pretoria pleaded guilty of High Treason.  
 26. Colonel Rhodes, Mr. Hammond, an American, and two other members of Reform Committee sentenced to death.  
 28. Death Sentence of Members of Reform Committee commuted.

*April 30.* Publication by Transvaal Government of Secret Telegrams of Reform Committee.

Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Chairman of Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression, resigned.

Strike of Plasterers and Labourers of London Building Trade.

London School Board adopted Resolutions requesting separate treatment under Education Bill.

*Bye-Election.*

Kerry, N. Division—	<i>General Election.</i>
M. J. Flavin (A.P.), returned without opposition.	Thos. Sexton (A.P.) Unopposed.
	Resigns.

*May 1.* North Aberdeen—

*Bye-Election.*

Capt. Pirie (L.)	2,909	<i>General Election.</i>
Tom Mann (I.L.P.)	2,479	W. A. Hunter (R.) 4,156
<hr/>		J. H. Mahon (I.L.P.) 608
L. majority .	430	R. majority . 3,548

*May 1.* Assassination of the Shah.

5. Education Bill Debate opened.

11. Resignation of Sir Jacobus de Wet, British Agent in Pretoria.

12. Education Bill. Mr. Asquith's Amendment rejected 428 to 156; Majority for Bill, 267. Second Reading carried.

Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities—

*Bye-Election.*

Sir William Priestley (C.)	<i>General Election.</i>
Elected without opposition.	Sir C. I. Pearson (C.) Unopposed.

18. Reform Committee Prisoners at Pretoria. Death sentences commuted to 15 years' imprisonment.

29. Jameson Raid. Committee of Enquiry nominated by Speaker of Cape Assembly.

*June 2.* Somerset (Frome Division)—

*Bye-Election.*

J. E. Barlow (L.)	5,062	<i>General Election.</i>
Lord A. Thynne (C.)	4,763	Viscount Weymouth (C.) 5,043
<hr/>		J. E. Barlow (L.) . . . 4,669

Lib. majority . 299

C. majority . 374

## Wick Burghs—

<i>Bye-Election.</i>	<i>General Election.</i>
J. C. Hedderwick (L.) 1,054	Sir John Pender (L.U.) 913
W. C. Smith (U.) 842	J. C. Hedderwick (L.) 889

Lib. majority . 212                    L.U. majority . 24

*June* 7. Soudan. Dervishes defeated at Ferket by Egyptian Force.

8. Mixed Tribunal at Cairo delivered judgment against the Egyptian Government and the Caisse of the Public Debt for the advance made from the Reserve Fund for the Nile Expedition.
11. Reform Prisoners released on payment £2,000 fine each.  
Education Bill in Committee.
12. Soudan Expedition. Lord Salisbury makes Statement on Policy.
13. Great Strike in St. Petersburg.
15. Unionist Meeting at Foreign Office on State of Public Business.  
Dr. Jameson and five officers committed for trial.
18. *United States.* William McKinley nominated as Republican Candidate for Presidency.
20. Madagascar declared a French Colony.
22. Education Bill withdrawn.
23. Canadian Elections. Liberal majority, 40.  
True Bill found against Dr. Jameson.

*July* 6. Lord George Hamilton's Motion that costs of Indian Troops in Egypt be charged to India carried 252 to 106.

10. *United States.* W. J. Bryan, of Nebraska, nominated by Democratic Convention of Chicago for Presidency.
17. Report of Jameson Select Committee rendered in Cape Assembly.
25. *United States.* W. J. Bryan nominated by Populists for Presidency.
27. International Socialist Workers and Trade Union Congress opened in Queen's Hall, London.
28. Dr. Jameson and Co-Defendants sentenced to imprisonment.
30. Mr. Chamberlain moved that a Select Committee should be appointed to enquire into the administration of British South Africa Company. Agreed unanimously.

- Aug.* 4. Li Hung Chang. Interview with Lord Salisbury.  
 5. British Government acknowledges right of Brazil to Island of Trinidad.  
 7. Royal Assent given to Conciliation (Trade Disputes) Bill, Finance Bill, etc.  
 13. The Indian Budget agreed to.  
 11. Royal Assent given to Appropriation Bill, the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, etc.  
 Prorogation of Parliament.  
 17. Sir Edmund Monson appointed Ambassador at Paris, and Sir Horace Rumbold at Vienna.  
 22. Jameson Raid. Major Coventry released from Holloway Gaol.  
 Surrender of Matoppo Indunas to Mr. Rhodes.  
 25. Death of Hamid bin Thwain, Sultan of Zanzibar. Said Khalid seized Palace and proclaimed himself Sultan.  
 26. Riot in Constantinople and Massacre of Armenians.  
 Mr. William C. Green appointed British Agent in South African Republic.  
 27. Said Khalid overthrown by English. Hamud bin Mahomed appointed Sultan.
- Sept.* 3. *United States.* Senator Palmer nominated for Presidency by Sound Money Democrats.  
 6. Annual Trade Union Congress at Edinburgh.  
 15. Army Officers who were convicted at Bow Street in connection with Jameson Raid allowed to retire from the Service.  
 23. Soudan. Dongola taken by Egyptian Army.  
 24. Mr. Gladstone speaks at Liverpool on behalf of the Armenians.
- Oct.* 2. Said Khalid, Zanzibar usurper, protected by German soldiers, conveyed to German East Africa Coast.  
 8. Death of William Morris.  
 5. Tsar and Tsaritsa in France.  
 6. Resignation of Lord Rosebery as Leader of Liberal Party.  
 14. New Press Law and Alien Expulsion Bill enacted in Transvaal.  
 26. Dr. Temple, Bishop of London, nominated Archbishop of Canterbury.  
 Treaty of peace signed between Abyssinia and Italy.

- Oct.* 31. Mr. Chamberlain elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University.
- Nov.* 2. Rt. Rev. Dr. Creighton appointed Bishop of London.
3. Election of Major William McKinley as President of United States.
4. Mr. E. J. Poynter elected President of the Royal Academy.
5. School of Arts and Crafts opened in Regent Street by London County Council.
7. Lord Balfour elected Rector of Edinburgh University.  
Alderman Faudel-Phillips admitted to office as Lord Mayor of London at Guildhall.
9. Speech of Lord Salisbury at Guildhall on Venezuelan Question.
10. Bradford (East Division)—

*Bye-Election.*

Capt. Hon. R. H. F. (Greville (C.)	4,921	H. Byron-Reed (C.)	5,813
A. Billson (L.)	4,526	W. S. Caine (L.)	5,189
J. Keir Hardie (I.L.P.)	1,953		
Cons. maj. . 395			Cons. maj. . 704

*General Election.*

11. Lord Huntly elected Rector of Aberdeen University.  
Famine in India. Viceroy reports 120,100 on relief works.
- Canada. Basis of settlement of Manitoba Schools Question published.
15. Treaty of Peace (signed Oct. 26th) by Italy and Abyssinia reported at Rome.
17. London County Council. Discussion on Works Department Accounts.
27. Arrest of Mr. Tom Mann at Hamburg.  
Proclamation issued for re-assembling of Parliament on January 19th.
- Dec.* 1. Dr. Jameson released from Holloway owing to ill-health.
2. Appeal Court of Mixed Tribunals gave judgment against Egyptian Government in respect of half million granted by majority of Commissioners of Public Debt for purposes of Dongola Expedition. Egyptian Government to refund the money.

- Dec. 3. Lord Cromer informs Egyptian Government that British Government would be prepared to advance funds to repay the half million advance.
8. London County Council agrees to purchase North Metropolitan and London Street Tramways systems.
10. Municipal Council of Vienna decides to municipalize the Gas Service.
11. Dispute between London and North Western Railway Company and Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants settled by intervention of Board of Trade. Dismissed employees to be reinstated.
14. Dublin Corporation unanimously pass Resolution demanding immediate attention of Government to excessive Taxation of Ireland (on Report of Financial Relations Commission).  
Court of Common Council of City of London approves Bill for dissolution of Commissioners of Sewers and for transfer of its powers to Common Council.
15. London County Council decides, after purchasing North Metropolitan and London Street Tramways Systems, to lease to North Metropolitan Company. Lease to expire 1910.  
Also agrees to build a seventh County Asylum at Epsom. Vote, £350,000.
18. *United States and Cuba.* Senate Committee on Foreign Relations decides to report favourably to the Senate a joint Resolution declaring in favour of recognition of the independence of Cuba.
27. Conciliation in Trades' Disputes Act. Lord Penrhyn refuses to meet his men accompanied by Board of Trade representative, to discuss dispute. Board of Trade withdraws.
28. United Meeting in Dublin Mansion House on report of Financial Relations Commission.

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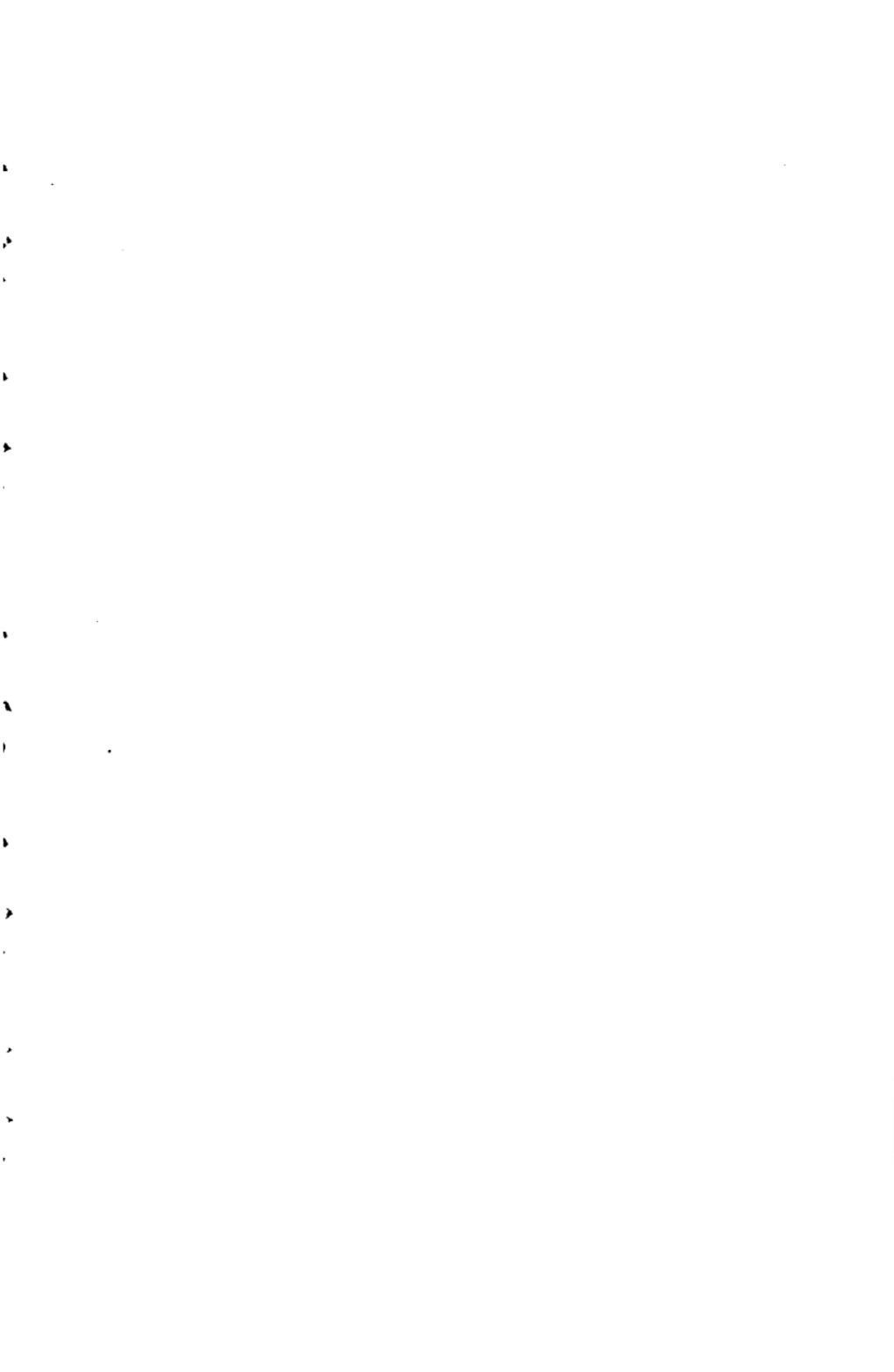
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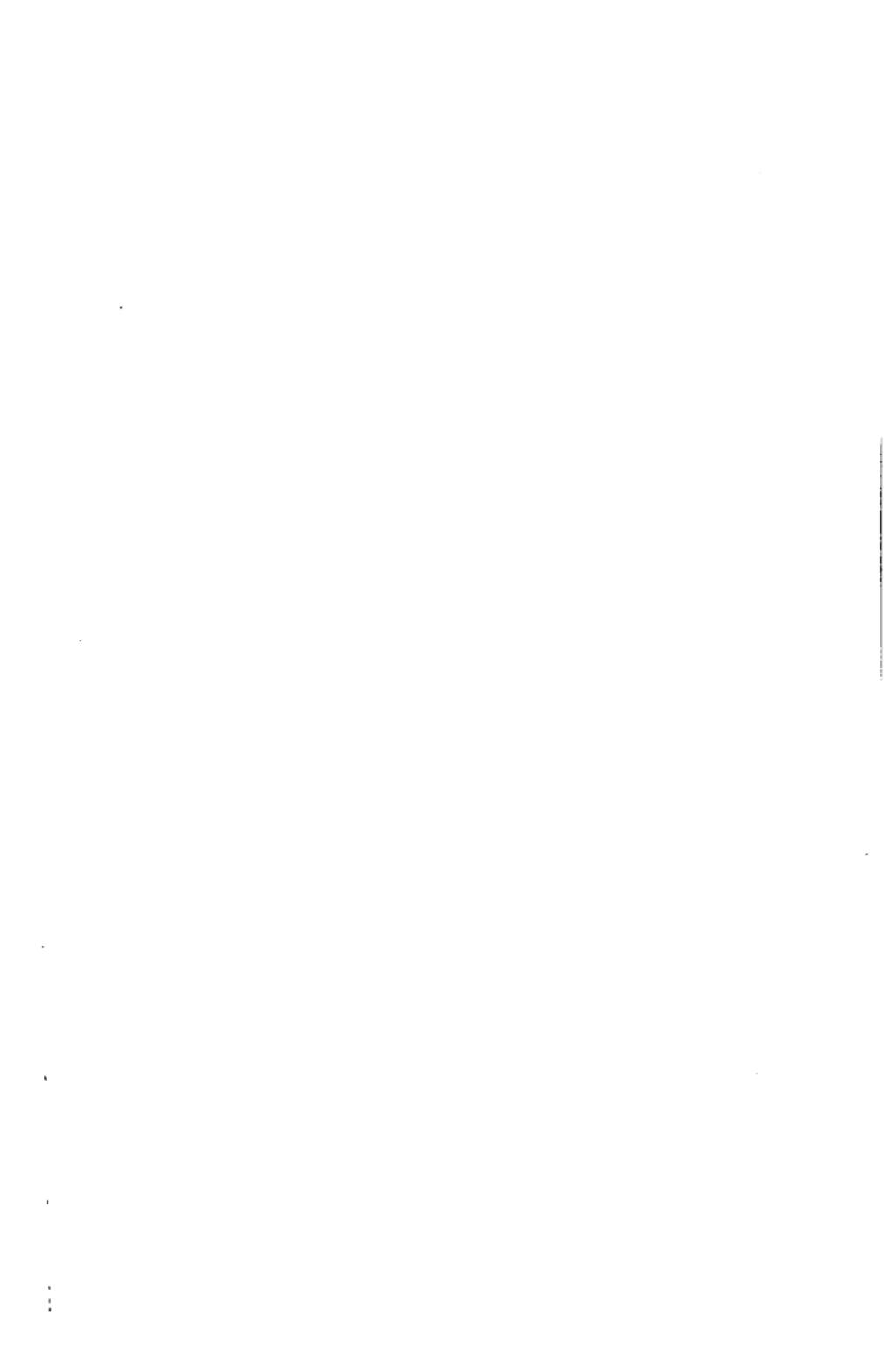
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